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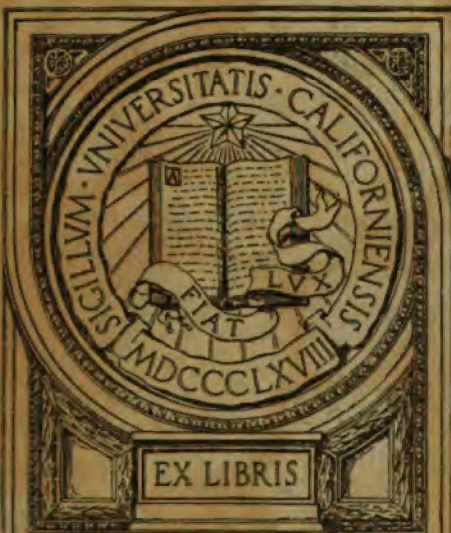
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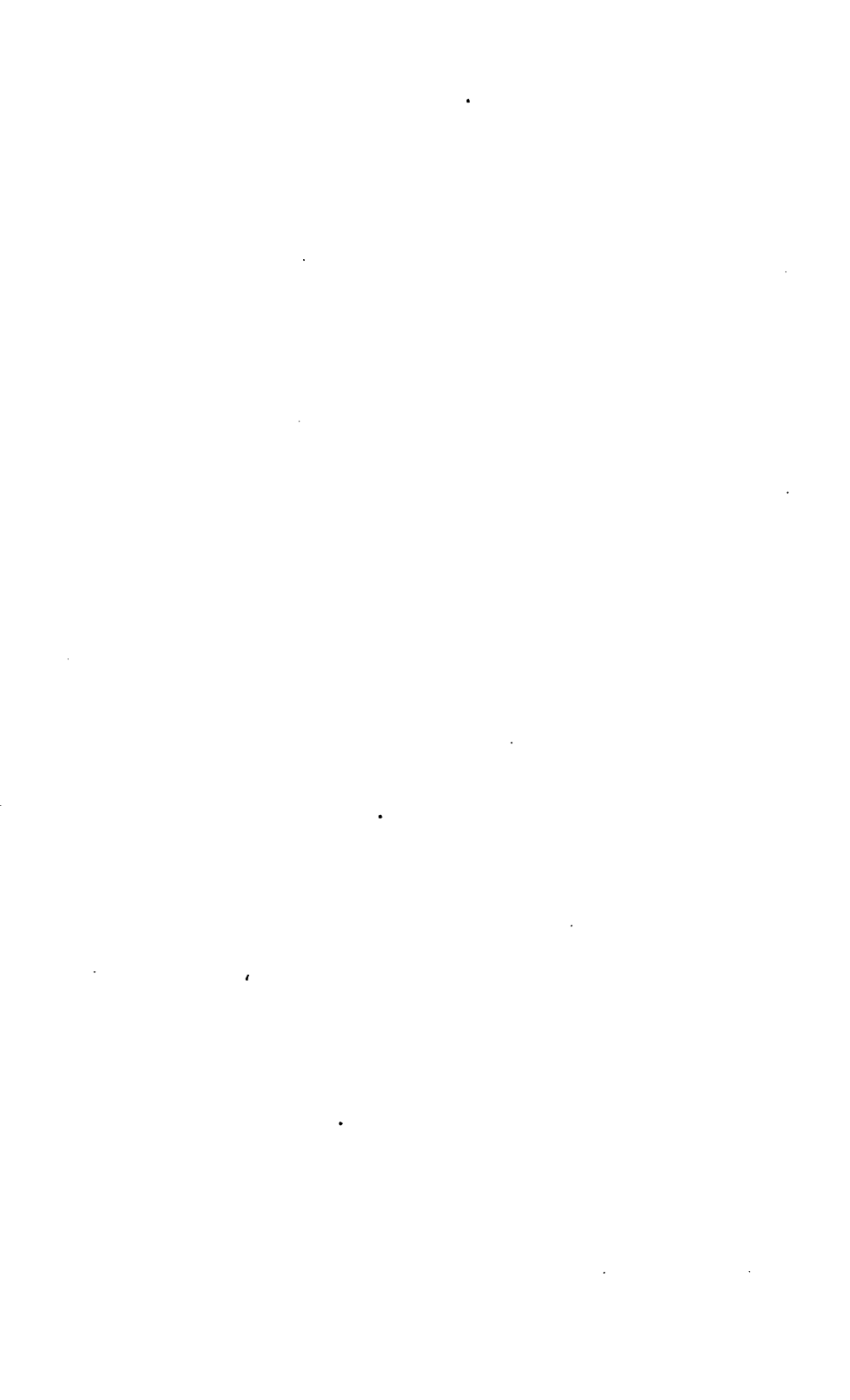


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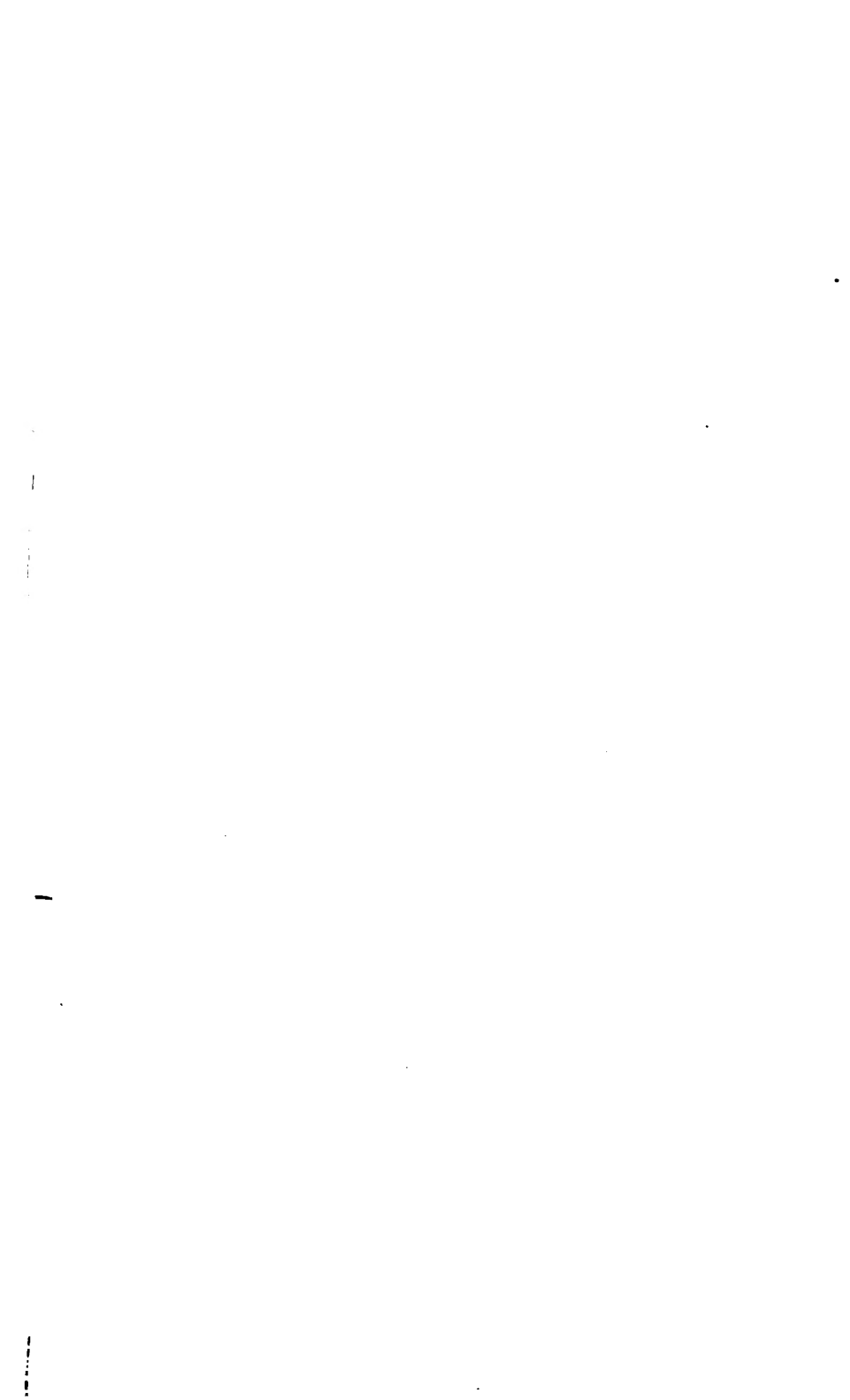


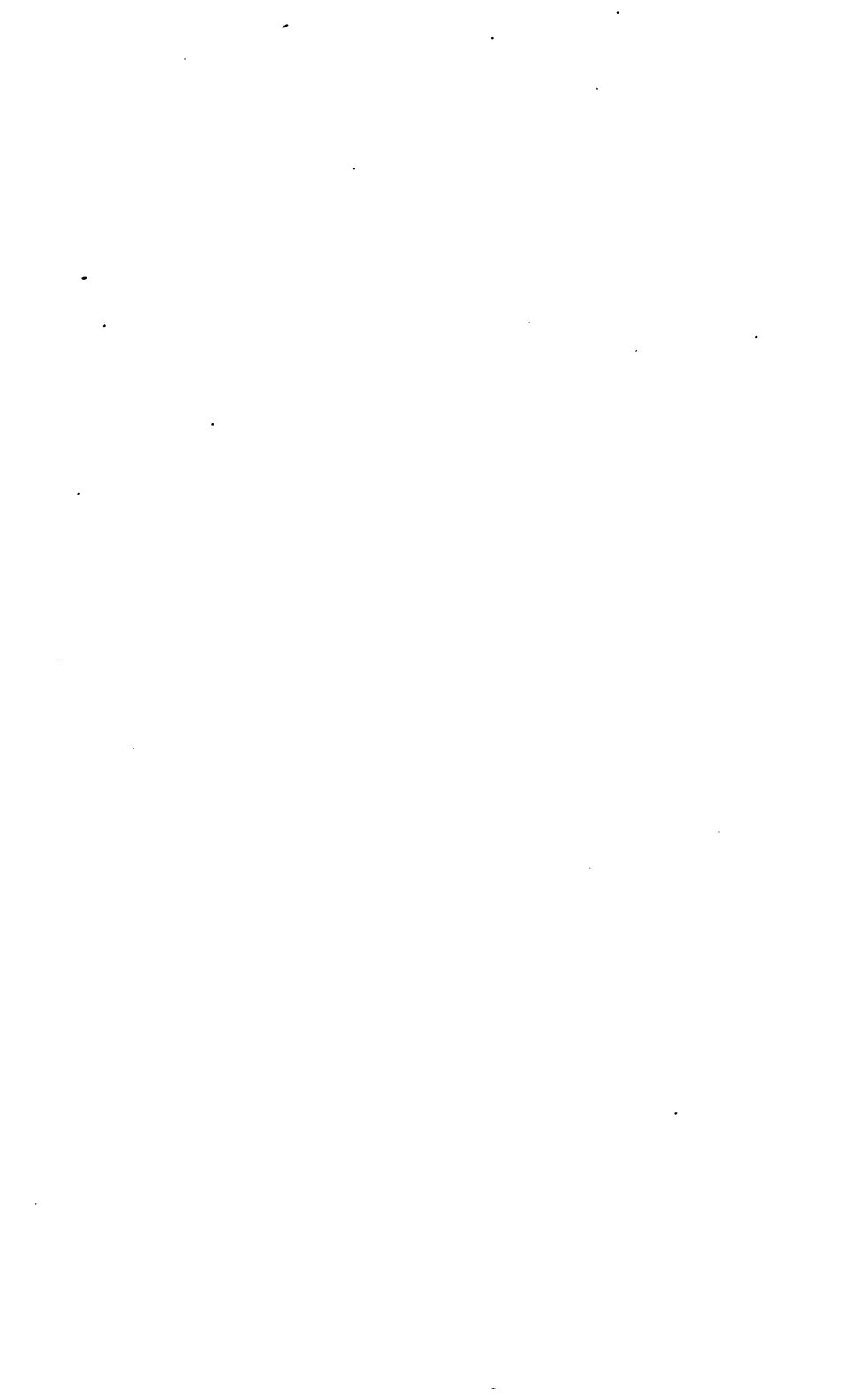












**HISTORY OF ENGLISH RHYTHMS.**

It is said by such as professe the mathematicall sciences, that all things stand by proportion, and that without it nothing could stand to be good or beautiful.

*Puttenham, Arte of English Poesie, Lib. ii. c. 1.*

A HISTORY  
OF  
ENGLISH RHYTHMS.

BY EDWIN GUEST, LL.D., D.C.L., F.R.S.,

LATE MASTER OF GORVILLE AND CAIUS COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

*A NEW EDITION,*

EDITED BY

THE REV. WALTER W. SKEAT, M.A.,

ELRINGTON AND BOSWORTH PROFESSOR OF ANGLO-SAXON IN THE UNIVERSITY OF  
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## NOTICE TO THE READER.

(PREFIXED TO THE FIRST EDITION, 1838.)

OWING to circumstances, which need not be detailed, the first Volume was printed off, two years before the greater part of the second Volume went to the press, and indeed before it was written. This may account for a seeming inaccuracy as regards dates; and will make it necessary for the reader, when he meets with the phrases, "a short time since," "two or three years ago," &c. to allow for the time, which has elapsed since they were written. Perhaps too it may serve, in some measure, as an apology for the additional notes<sup>1</sup> at the end of each volume. Two years could hardly pass away, without the author seeing reason to modify much that he had advanced, upon a subject so novel and so extensive as the present one.

---

<sup>1</sup> [Most of the notes to the first edition are now incorporated with the text, or have suggested corrections in it.]



## PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

THE former edition of the present work was published in two volumes, with the following title : "A History of English Rhythms, by Edwin Guest, Esq. M.A. Fellow of Caius College, Cambridge. London ; William Pickering, 1838." In place of a Preface, it contained a brief "Notice to the Reader," here reprinted, which concluded with the words "two years could hardly pass away, without the author seeing reason to modify much that he had advanced, upon a subject so novel and so extensive as the present one ;" and, it may be mentioned, in particular, that (as shown in the note to p. 176) the very strict views upon the subject of elision which were laid down in the first volume seem to have been considerably relaxed in other passages of the work. What further modifications the author may have desired to make, we have, unfortunately, no means of ascertaining ; but we may infer, from the long delay in issuing a second edition, that it may well have been his hope and intention to introduce many considerable improvements, though the laborious character of the work rendered it very difficult to do so. But the opportunity for this never arrived ; and all that now remained to be done was, to ascertain what improvements could at any rate be made, in the absence of such revision as only an author can effectively give.

In the first place, the former edition was somewhat carelessly printed, and contained a long list of errata, which are now removed. It further appeared that even this list was not exhaustive, and several other printer's errors have now been silently corrected.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Even thus, a few of them have escaped detection in the revision ; see the List of Errata to the present edition, p. xix.

Secondly, the former edition contained several Notes at the end, *some* of which would have been introduced into the text, if they had occurred to the author sooner. Advantage has now been taken of doing this in the course of reprinting, wherever it seemed advisable to do so.

Thirdly, the Notes are now considerably augmented (1) by help of some MS. annotations in the author's own handwriting, made in the copy which was in his own possession; (2) by help of some MS. annotations in a copy formerly belonging to Mr. Edmund Lenthal Swifte, and now in the possession of Mr. S. Crompton, who most kindly lent the book for this purpose; and (3) by some additional remarks made by the editor.

Fourthly, whilst the text is substantially the same as before, the editor has added a few remarks, distinguished by being inserted within square brackets, whenever they seemed to be absolutely necessary. For example, at p. 349, the words "Here follows Alfred's translation, Met. xxvi. l. 4" have been inserted, for the sake of greater clearness, and in order to give the reference. The same explanation applies to the numerous brief foot-notes within square brackets, the letters "W. W. S." being further added to the footnotes whenever they supply additional information.

Fifthly, the very numerous well-arranged quotations, which give the book its great and permanent interest and value, have been subjected, as far as it could conveniently be done, to a thorough and searching revision; a matter which has caused the expenditure of considerable time and trouble. In the former edition, many of the references were left vague; so that we find "F. Q." for Spenser's Fairy Queen, "W. Scott" for quotations from songs out of the Waverley Novels, and the like. The difficulty of discovering the whereabouts of many of these has been very great, and in a few cases search has been baffled; but the convenience to the reader of finding the references supplied is so obvious that the opportunity was not to be lost. The extremely full index to words occurring in Anglo-Saxon poetry in Dr. Grein's "Sprachschatz der angelsächsischen



Dichter" has proved of great service; as have also Dr. Schmidt's "Shakespeare Lexicon," Cleveland's "Concordance to Milton," and Abbott's "Concordance to Pope." The edition of the English Poets, published by Chalmers in 1810, has been very useful.

In particular, it must be borne in mind that Dr. Guest was quite a pioneer in Middle-English literature, and had to get together a large number of his quotations by the laborious process of transcribing them for himself from the MSS., and had nothing but these transcripts to trust to; there was not even at that time any edition of Layamon or of the Ormulum, nor was the Early English Text Society founded till nearly thirty years after his book appeared. Hence it often happened that exact references could not be given, nor could the passages cited be revised whilst passing through the press. Hence it will be readily understood that numerous references have now been added to good editions, and that, by help of such editions, a large number of corrections have been made in the passages cited, and many obscurities cleared up. Even of later authors we now possess much better editions; and, in several quotations from Shakespeare, Spenser, and the like, the text of the quotations has been conformed to that of the "Globe" editions of Shakespeare and Spenser, and to the best modern editions of other authors.

It may here be observed that the quotations from Lydgate's "Fall of Princes," from Barclay's "Ship of Foles," from Sir T. More's "Rufol Lamentation" and "Book of Fortune," and from Surrey's "Description of Spring" (p. 298), were taken from the Preface to Todd's edition of "Johnson's Dictionary," published in 1827. This accounts for the reading *mockers* discussed in the note to p. 225; and may serve to remind us that the author had frequently to work with the very imperfect materials supplied by inaccurate and careless editions, a difficulty which at the present date does not exist; so that we can hardly appreciate at its right value the wonderful industry which reduced such materials to order.

Sixthly, the former edition had no index; and indeed, an

index would not have been of much value, in the absence of reasonably good editions of our older literature. But now that the exact references have been supplied to almost every quotation, and many editions have been cited in the foot-notes, the addition of an "Index of Authors quoted and referred to" has become a necessity, and the construction of it presented no difficulty. We can now tell how often, and where, the author has cited any given play of Shakespeare, or any given poem of any other author. The convenience of this is the greater, because Dr. Guest's great work has long been the convenient store-house whence many writers upon prosody have drawn their illustrations, sometimes without any acknowledgment that they have done so.

Lastly, the reader will soon find that, throughout the work, the different "sections" or arrangements of (prosodial) feet are denoted by the numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, &c. As these numbers are, from the nature of the case, arbitrarily chosen, it is next to impossible to remember them long without confusion, and it becomes convenient to tabulate them for ready reference. Hence a "Table of Rhythms" has been compiled and added, which will be found following the Table of Contents, on p. xvii.

One more necessary remark will render the plan of the book easier to understand. The mark | so constantly used throughout the book to indicate the scansion, invariably marks *the accented syllables*; and is *not* used to mark the division into feet as in the case of Greek and Latin verses. It is, in fact, only another way of marking accent, used in place of the more usual, but far more clumsy method of employing marks of accentuation. Thus it is the same thing whether we write

When | the Bri|tish war|rior queen |

or whether we write

Whén the Brítish wárrior quéen.

This is an excellent and most convenient notation, and, for English verse, certainly the best, when it is once fairly

understood. It is also extremely easy. Yet, when Dr. Guest correctly scans a certain line thus—

In | the hexam | eter ri | ses : the foun | tain's sil | very col | umn,

it is curious to find a MS. note in Mr. Swift's copy to this effect: "I think the proper scansion of this line is:—

In the hex | ameter | rises the | fountain's | silvery | column |."

That is to say, Mr. Swift "corrects" the author by scanning the line *exactly the same as before*; he has merely employed the symbol | in a sense of his own, by dividing the line into feet in the usual schoolboy fashion. It is extraordinary that a careful reader could peruse the book without acquiring the sense of a symbol which occurs so many thousands of times.

The remarks upon the values of the English letters should be compared with the later investigations by Mr. Ellis and Mr. Sweet. The study of phonetics has advanced of late years very rapidly; indeed, the most surprising thing is that Dr. Guest was already discussing such matters in 1838, when to pay any heed to them was quite exceptional.

The remarks upon the dialects are particularly interesting as showing how much the author was in advance of many of his contemporaries. We already find him arguing for the existence of three main dialects, in precise accordance with the results obtained long afterwards by Dr. Morris.

It is, of course, a matter for regret that the author found no opportunity for revising the work in that masterly manner of which he alone was capable; still the work has long been well known as giving a useful and serviceable survey of a difficult subject, and a reprint of it has long been desired. The opportunity has accordingly been taken of introducing all such improvements as, under the circumstances, were possible.

I have in general preserved the peculiarities of spelling, &c. of the former edition; I have, however, substituted *tie* for *tye* on p. 13, and *diphthong* for *dipthong* throughout.

Further, as Dr. Guest rightly rejected the spelling *rhyme*, for which he substituted *rhime*, it became necessary to go a step further, by employing the correct spelling *rime*.

Some account of Dr. Guest and his work, with particular reference to his historical investigations, will be found in the Prefatory Notice to his "*Origines Celticæ*," published for the first time by Messrs. Macmillan and Co. in the present year. A list of his various contributions to philological subjects is appended to the present volume.

WALTER W. SKEAT.

July, 1882.

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## TABLE OF RHYTHMS.

THE various "sections," or groups of accented and unaccented syllables, are denoted by *numbers*, as explained on p. 160. For example, a group of syllables, in which the *first* and *third* are accented, and the *second* unaccented, is called 1. The same group may conveniently be denoted by the letters *AbA*, where the capital letter *A* denotes an accented syllable, and the smaller letter *b* denotes an unaccented one. If to this section an unaccented syllable be appended, we get the *lengthened* section, denoted by 1 *l*, or by *AbAb*; and if *two* unaccented syllables be appended to the same, we get the *doubly lengthened* section, denoted by 1 *ll*, or by *AbAbb*. This being premised, the full table of rhythms, according to Dr. Guest's notation, can be interpreted as follows:—

1. AbA.	5. bAbA.	9. bbAbA.
1 <i>l</i> . AbAb.	5 <i>l</i> . bAbAb.	9 <i>l</i> . bbAbAb.
1 <i>ll</i> . AbAbb.	5 <i>ll</i> . bAbAbb.	9 <i>ll</i> . bbAbAbb.
2. AbbA.	6. bAbbA.	10. bbAbbA.
2 <i>l</i> . AbbAb.	6 <i>l</i> . bAbbAb.	10 <i>l</i> . bbAbbAb.
2 <i>ll</i> . AbbAbb.	6 <i>ll</i> . bAbbAbb.	10 <i>ll</i> . bbAbbAbb.
3. AbAbbA.	7. bAbAbbA.	11. bbAbAbbA.
3 <i>l</i> . AbAbbAb.	7 <i>l</i> . bAbAbbAb.	11 <i>l</i> . bbAbAbbAb.
3 <i>ll</i> . AbAbbAbb.	7 <i>ll</i> . bAbAbbAbb.	11 <i>ll</i> . bbAbAbbAbb.
4. AbbAbbA.	8. bAbbAbbA.	12. bbAbbAbbA.
4 <i>l</i> . AbbAbbAb.	8 <i>l</i> . bAbbAbbAb.	12 <i>l</i> . bbAbbAbbAb.
4 <i>ll</i> . AbbAbbAbb.	8 <i>ll</i> . bAbbAbbAbb.	12 <i>ll</i> . bbAbbAbbAbb.

Observe that 5, 6, 7, and 8 only differ from 1, 2, 3, and 4 by having an unaccented syllable prefixed; and again,  
b

9, 10, 11, and 12 only differ from 5, 6, 7, and 8 in the same way.

Further, the section 1 is intended to include similar metres of *more* than three syllables, such as AbAbA, AbAbAbA, and the like.

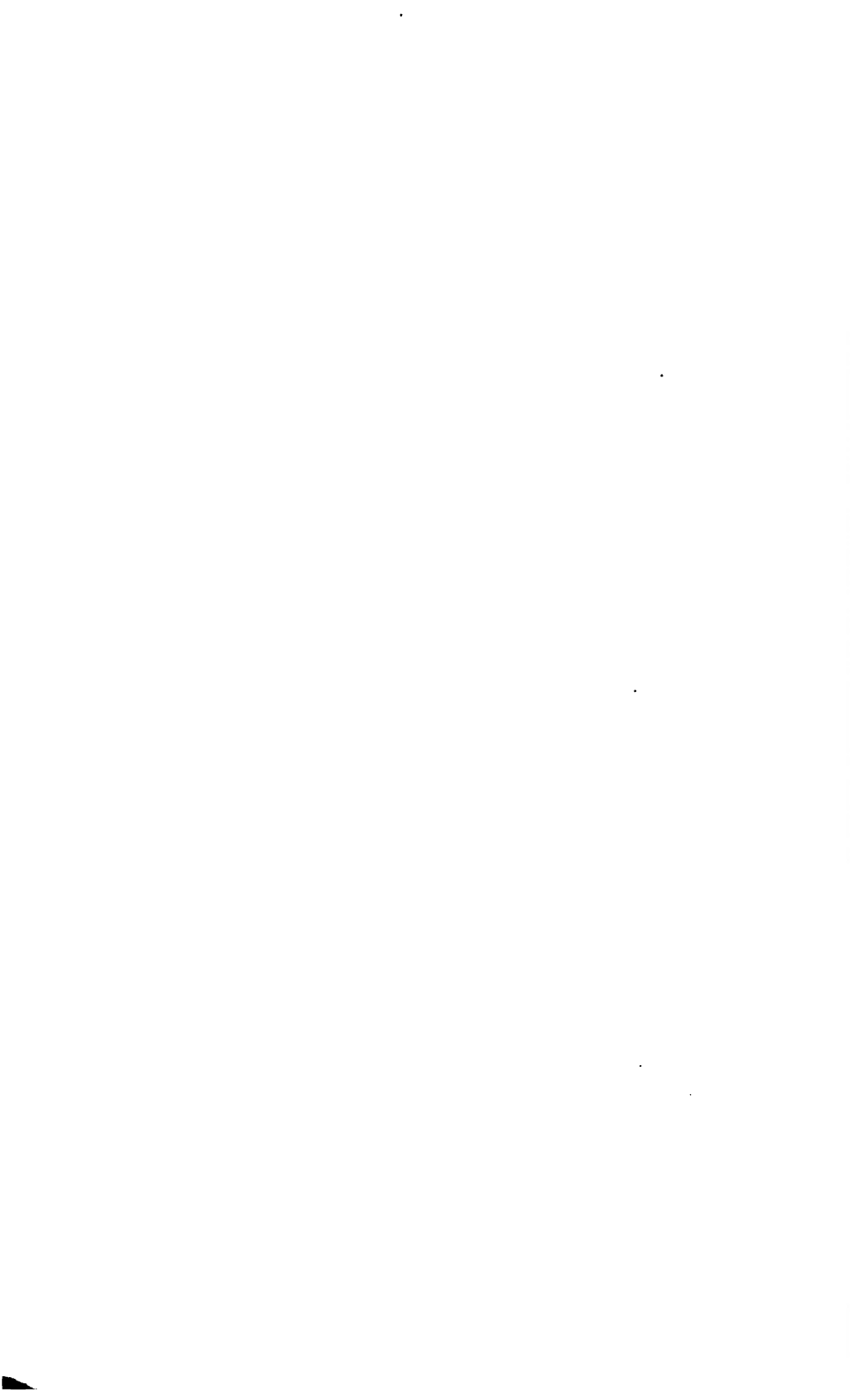
The application of the above table is very easy ; two examples may suffice. At p. 188, mention is made of the verse 1 : 5. This means AbA : bAbA, as shown in the example — Haste | thee nymph | : and bring | with thee |. The colon denotes the *pause*, and the upright bars denote the *accents*. Conversely, the line—And | the milk | maid : sing | eth blithe |—quoted on the same page, is to be denoted by AbAb : AbA, or by 1 l : 1.

Reference to the above table will explain any collocation of sections at once.

For the meaning of the symbol *p*, see p. 280.

## ERRATA.

- P. 19, l. 14. For *H. VI.* read 2 *H. VI.*  
P. 41, last line. For *Cynthea's* read *Cynthia's*.  
P. 51, l. 14. For *Chalm.* read *Chaloner*.  
P. 59, seventh quotation. For *part* read *parte*.  
P. 92, second quotation. For *danger* read *daunger*.  
P. 163, l. 12. For *mercy* read *pity*; and see note on p. 710.  
P. 191, fourth quotation. For *H. VI.* read 2 *H. VI.*  
P. 218, fourth quotation. For *Draw near to fortune* read *Draw you to fortune*; and *for wel* read *well*.  
P. 222, tenth quotation. For *advance* read *ausance*.  
P. 242, first quotation, l. 3. For *resigne* read *resyne*.  
P. 286, third quotation, l. 2. Read *Science all is vain*.  
P. 378, l. 4. For *myrgirgum* read *myrgingum*.  
P. 517, l. 4 from bottom. For *Salve* read *Solve*.  
P. 518, l. 12. For *Humphrey* read *Philippe*. (See pp. 697, 699.)  
P. 540, l. 3. For *Chronical* read *Chronicle*.  
P. 669, note, l. 4. For *she lies* read *I ly*.





## CHAPTER I.

### RHYTHM

in its widest sense may be defined as the law of succession. It is the regulating principle of every *whole*, that is made up of proportional parts, and is as necessary to the regulation of motion, or the arrangement of matter, as to the orderly succession of sounds. By applying it to the first of these purposes we have obtained the dance; and sculpture and architecture are the results of its application to the second. The rhythmical arrangement of sounds not articulated produces music, while from the like arrangement of articulate sounds we get the cadences of prose and the measures of verse.

Verse may be defined as a succession of articulate sounds regulated by a rhythm so definite, that we can readily foresee the results which follow from its application. Rhythm is also met with in prose, but in the latter its range is so wide, that we rarely can anticipate its flow, while the pleasure we derive from verse is founded on this very anticipation.

As verse consists merely in the arrangement of certain sounds according to a certain rhythm, it is obvious, that neither poetry nor even sense can be *essential* to it. We may be alive to the beauty of a foreign rhythm, though we do not understand the language, and the burthen of many an English song has long yielded a certain pleasure, though every whit as unmeaning as the nonsense verses of the schoolboy.

In considering the general character of any proposed metre, we should have especial regard to three circumstances; first to the *elements*, which are to be arranged;



secondly to the *accidents*, by which these elements are distinguished; and thirdly to the *law of succession*, by which the arrangement is effected.

In making verse, the elements subjected to the rhythm, may be either syllables, or verses, or staves. The only accidents, which need be noticed as of rhythmical value, are three, the time or quantity, the accent, and the modification of the sound.

Rhythm may be marked either by the time or the accent. In the great family of languages which has been termed the Indo-European, and which spread from the Ganges to the Shannon, *three* made time the index of their rhythm, to wit the Sanscrit, Greek, and Latin; all the others adopted accent. It is remarkable that those dialects which now represent the Sanscrit, Greek, and Latin, have lost their temporal and possess merely an accentual rhythm. We are able in some measure to follow the progress of this change. So gradual was it in the Greek, that even as late as the eleventh century there were authors who wrote indifferently in either rhythm. The origin, however, of accentual verse, as it now prevails in those languages, is by no means clear. Whether it were borrowed from the northern invader, or were the natural growth of a mixed and broken language, or merely the revival of a vulgar rhythm, which had been heretofore kept under by the prevalence of one more fashionable and perhaps more perfect, are questions I shall pass by, as being at least as difficult as they are interesting.

#### ARRANGEMENT OF THE SUBJECT.

Having premised thus much as to the meaning of our terms, I will now lay before the reader the course I shall follow in tracing the progress of our English rhythms. In the second book we shall consider the rhythm of individual verses; and in the third the rhythm of particular passages, or, to speak more precisely, the flow of several verses in combination; while the fourth book will be devoted to the history of our *staves*, that is, of those regular combinations,

which form as it were a second class of elements to be regulated by the rhythm.

The book which opens with the present chapter is little more than introductory, but the matters discussed in it are of high importance to the right understanding of the subject. In the next chapter we shall consider the different *modifications of sound*, with a view to the aid they afford us in embellishing and perfecting the rhythm. In the third we shall inquire what constitutes a *syllable*, and discuss the nature of *accent* in the fourth, and of *quantity* in the fifth. The various kinds of *rime* will be the subject of the sixth chapter, and in the seventh and last we shall treat of the *rhythmical pauses*.

## CHAPTER II.

## THE VOICE.

If we drop a small heavy body into still water it forms a circular wave, which gradually enlarges and loses itself upon the surface. In like manner, if one hard body strike against another—as the cog of a metal wheel against a quill—a wave is formed in the air which expands on all sides round the point of contact. When this wave reaches the ear, it produces on that organ the sensation of sound.

If now the wheel be turned round, so that the cogs strike against the quill in succession, several concentric waves are produced, following each other at equidistant periods of time; and if the velocity be such that there are more than thirty sound-waves in a second, the sensation produced by one lasts till another enters the ear, and a *continuous* sound is the result. This continuous sound is called a *tone* or musical note.

As we increase the number of sound-waves, the tone changes its character, and is said to become *sharper*. When more than six thousand enter the ear in a second, the tone becomes so sharp and shrill as to be no longer perceptible by organs constituted like our own.

The wave which thus produces the sensation of sound, differs widely in origin from that which moves along the surface of the water. The latter is formed by the vertical rising of the watery particles, and as these fall again in obedience to the force of gravity, they drive upwards those next adjoining. The motion of the particles is thus perpendicular or nearly so to the direction of the wave's motion. The air-wave is formed by the condensation as well as by the displacing of the particles, and the moving power in this case is elasticity. The airy particles are

driven on a heap, till the force of elasticity becomes greater than the impelling force, and they are driven back to their former station. The neighbouring particles are then similarly acted on, and a slight motion or vibration in the same line of direction as that in which the sound-wave is traveling, takes place in all the particles. On the size of this vibration depends the *loudness* of the sound.

The tones of the human voice are produced by the vibrations of two membranes, which have been called the *vocal ligaments*. These are set in motion by a stream of air gushing from the lungs, and we can at pleasure regulate the sharpness and the loudness of the sound produced. The mechanism, by which this is effected, has been lately made the subject of some very interesting speculations.<sup>1</sup>

If two elastic membranes stretched upon frames so as to leave one edge free, be placed opposite to each other, with the free edges uppermost, and a current of air pass between them from beneath, they will be differently affected according to their inclination towards each other. If they incline from each other, they will bulge inwards, if towards each other, they will bulge outwards, if they be parallel, they will vibrate. Now the wind-pipe is contracted near the mouth by a projecting mass of muscles called the Glottis. The edges of the Glottis are membranes, and form the vocal ligaments. Ordinarily these membranous edges are inclined from each other, and consequently no vibrations take place during the passage of the breath; but by the aid of certain muscles, we can place them parallel to each other, when they immediately vibrate and produce a tone. With the aid of other muscles, we can increase their tension, and thereby the sharpness of the tone, and by driving the air more forcibly from the lungs, we may increase its loudness. The tone thus formed is modified by the cavities of the throat, nose, and mouth. These modifications form the first elements of articulate language, or the *letters*.

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<sup>1</sup> See Mr. Willis's papers in the Cambridge Philosophical Transactions.

## VOCAL LETTERS.

It has been shown<sup>1</sup> that the note of a common organ-reed may take the qualities of all the vowel-sounds in succession. This is effected by merely lengthening the tube which confines the vibrations. It would seem, therefore, that the peculiar characters of the different vowels depend entirely on the length of the cavity, which modifies the voice.

In pronouncing the long *a* in *father*, the cavity seems barely, if at all, extended beyond the throat; in pronouncing the *au* of *aught*, it reaches to the root of the tongue, and to the middle of the palate in pronouncing the long *e* of *eat*; the sound of the long *o* in *oat*, requires the cavity to be extended to the lips, which must be stretched out to form a cavity long enough to pronounce the *u* in *jute*.

Every addition to the length of the tube or cavity, affects in a greater or less degree the character of the tone. The possible number of vowel-sounds, therefore, can have no limit; but as there are rarely more than seven or eight in any one language, we may conclude that the human ear is not readily sensible to the nicer distinctions.

In pronouncing the vowels *a* and *e*, as they sound in *ale* and *eel*, we narrow the cavity by raising the tongue towards the palate, while in pronouncing *a*, *au*, *o*, as they sound in *father*, *aught*, *oat*, the cavity is broad and open. These two sets of vowels have accordingly been distinguished as the narrow and the broad vowels.

Next to the vowels, the letters which have spread most widely, are the three,

*b, d, g,*

as pronounced in *ab, ad, ag*. If we try to dwell upon the consonants which end these words, we find ourselves unable to do so but for a short time, and even then it requires some muscular exertion. In each of the three cases the tone seems to be modified by a *closed* cavity, no aperture being

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<sup>1</sup> By Mr. Willis.

left for the breath to escape by. In pronouncing *b*, the lips are closed, and the vibrations are confined to the throat and mouth; in pronouncing *d*, the tongue is raised to the palate, and the throat and hinder portion of the mouth are the only open cavities; in pronouncing *g*, the tone seems to be modified merely by the hollow of the throat. We shall call these letters from the circumstances of their formation the *close letters*.

The letters *b*, *d*, *g* have a very near connexion with the three nasals

*m*, *n*, *ng*.<sup>1</sup>

The only difference in their formation is, that in pronouncing the latter, the breath passes freely through the nostril. With this exception, the organs are disposed precisely in the same way for pronouncing *m*, *n*, *ng*, as for pronouncing *b*, *d*, *g*. As the nostril affords a free passage for the breath, we may dwell on these letters during a whole respiration.

*v*, *dh*.<sup>2</sup>

have the strongest affinity to *b* and *d*. The peculiarity of their formation lies in the free passage of the breath through the interstices of the upper teeth. To the edge of these teeth we raise the lip in pronouncing *v*, and the tongue in pronouncing *dh*, instead of joining the lips, or raising the tongue to the palate. As these teeth form part of the enclosure which modifies the voice, the breath may pass between them, and we may dwell upon the letters during a whole respiration, as is seen in pronouncing the words *av*, *adh*.

*w*, *y*,

are never heard in pronunciation except at the beginning of a syllable and before some other vowel. They seem merely to represent the short vowels *u* and *i* (as heard in *put* and *pit*), melting into their several diphthongs. They

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<sup>1</sup> This character represents the sound which ends such words as *loving*, *telling*, &c.

<sup>2</sup> *dh* represents the vocal sound of *th* as heard in *the*, *their*, *those*, &c.

are generally considered as consonants ; but if the *y* of *your* be a consonant, so must also be the *e* of *Europe*.

*l, r.*

The peculiarity in the formation of these letters is a certain trembling or vibration of the tongue, whence they may be called the trembling letters. In pronouncing *l* the tongue is raised to the palate, as in forming the letter *d*, but the breath is allowed to escape between it and the side teeth, and thereby causes the loose edges of the tongue to vibrate. In pronouncing the letter *r* the tongue is raised towards the palate without touching it, and the breath in passing causes it to vibrate.<sup>1</sup>

These tremblings or vibrations of the tongue are quite distinct from the vibrations of the voice, and may be produced during a whisper when the voice is absent.

The only two vocal sounds which remain to be considered are

*z, zh.*<sup>2</sup>

In pronouncing *z* the tongue is raised to the palate in nearly the same position it occupies in pronouncing *e*, save that, instead of lying hollow so as to form a tube or funnel for the voice, the surface rises in a convex shape and leaves but a narrow slit or aperture between it and the roof of the mouth. By lengthening the aperture we get the sound of *zh*. These letters may be called the sibilants or hissing letters.

WHISPER LETTERS.<sup>3</sup>

Hitherto we have spoken only of vocal letters, or, in

<sup>1</sup> Our grammarians tell us that "*r* is never mute." Now, if I may trust my ear, *r* is not pronounced at the end of a syllable, unless the following syllable open with a vowel. It is said that, at the end of a syllable, *r* is *obscurely* pronounced ; but I have observed that a very slight pronunciation of this letter has been sufficient to convict the speaker of being an Irishman, and that many who insist upon its pronunciation, drop it immediately their attention is diverted or their vigilance relaxed.

<sup>2</sup> By the character *zh* is represented the sound of *z* in *aswz*.

<sup>3</sup> The distinction here taken between vocal and whisper letters appears to

other words, of the different modifications of the *voice*. If the vocal ligaments be so inclined to each other as not to vibrate, the emission of breath from the lungs produces merely a whisper. This whisper may be modified in like manner as the voice, by similar arrangements of the organs ; and every vocal sound has its corresponding whisper-sound, that might, if custom had so willed it, have constituted a distinct letter.

It is, however, doubtful if there ever was a language which had its whisper letters perfect. In our own the number of whisper letters is nine. The three close letters, the two dentals or teeth-breathing letters, the two sibilants, and the letter *w*, have each of them their whisper letters, and the aspirate *h* is the ninth.

*Vocal letters.*

b  
d  
g  
v  
dh  
z  
zh  
w

*Whisper letters.*

p  
t  
k  
f  
th  
s  
sh  
wh  
h<sup>1</sup>

We have lost all distinction between *dh* and *th* in our spelling, though we still distinguish them in pronunciation,

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me important. I once thought it was original ; but in conversing on this subject with a respected friend, to whose instructions I owe much, I found *his* views so nearly coinciding with my own, that I have now but little doubt the hint was borrowed.

<sup>1</sup> I have here considered *h* as a letter. Our grammarians differ on this point, but I confess that *usage* is against me. There is little doubt, that its old and genuine pronunciation was much like the palatal breathing of the Germans ; and such is the power which some persons still give to it. But the people altogether neglect *h*, and others look upon it merely as the symbol of aspiration. In like manner, *wh* is usually treated as an aspirated *w*. Such, however, is the unsettled state of our language, that I have known men who prided themselves on their accuracy and refinement in the pronunciation of these letters *h*, *wh*, &c., and who nevertheless gave them three or four different properties, are they had well uttered as many sentences.



as is seen at once in comparing the sound of *th* in *this*, *then*, *clothes*, to *loathe*—with its sound in *thisle*, *thin*, *cloths*, *loath*.

The distinction also between the connected letter-sounds *zh* and *sh* does not appear in our orthography, though at once sensible to the ear in comparing the sound of *asure* with that of *Ashur*.

That *wh* represents the whisper sound of *w* will, I think, be clear, if we compare the initial sounds of *where*, *when*, *while*, with those of *were*, *wen*, *wile*.<sup>1</sup> It is probable that in the Anglo-Saxon *hwær*, *hwanne*, *hwil*, the *w* may have been vocal, and the *h* may have represented a distinct breathing; but it would be difficult to account for the change of *hw* into *wh*, which took place at so early a period (perhaps as early as the 12th century), unless it indicated a change in the pronunciation; and this change would naturally be to the whisper sound of the *w*.

In this view of the case *w* may put in a fair claim to the title of consonant. If the true definition of a vowel be, that it is a letter which makes any part of a word, into which it enters, a distinct syllable, then *w* has clearly no right to the title of vowel. Nor can we reasonably call the initial sounds of *were*, *wen*, *wile* diphthongal, unless we allow the initial sounds of *where*, *when*, *while*, to be diphthongs also. But were this so, we should have part of a diphthong a mere whisper while the other part remained vocal. Our *w* then, amid a choice of difficulties, may, perhaps, be allowed the title of consonant; but the same reasoning does not apply to the *y*. The latter, I think, can only be considered as a letter indicating the initial sound of a diphthong.

The whisper sounds of the two liquids *l*, *r*, constitute two distinct letters in Welsh, and in several other languages. But the Latin *rh* and the Greek *ρ* were certainly aspirated letter-sounds; the accounts of their pronunciation, handed down to us by the old grammarians, are too explicit to leave any room for doubt upon the subject.

That these letters *p*, *t*, *k*, *f*, &c., are the whisper sounds

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<sup>1</sup> See, however, note 1, on page 9.

of *b*, *d*, *g*, *v*, &c., may, I think, be shown without much difficulty. If we try to pronounce the words *ab*, *ad*, *ag*, *av*, &c., in a whisper they cannot be distinguished from *ap*, *at*, *ak*, *af*, &c. Again, the vibrations of the organs, which are obvious while we are pronouncing a vocal letter, cease immediately we change to the whisper sound; but the disposition of the organs remains unchanged. Thus, in pronouncing the *v* of *av*, if we change to a whisper, the vibrations of the lips and teeth cease; and without any change in the position of the organs we find ourselves pronouncing *f*.

The number then of English consonantal sounds, if we consider *w* as one, amounts to twenty-two; whereof thirteen are vocal and nine mere whisper sounds.<sup>1</sup>

The vowels are eleven in number. The long *a*, *e*, *o*, *u*, as heard in *father*, *reel*, *roll*, *rule*; *au* and *a* as heard in *aught*, *ate*; and the short *a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, *u*, as heard in *pat*, *pet*, *pit*, *pot*, *put*. The diphthongs are twelve,<sup>2</sup> *ei*, *oi* and *ou*, as heard in *height*, *hoity*, *out*; and eleven others formed by prefixing *y* to the eleven vowels. These are heard in the following words, *yard*, *yeen*, *yoke*, *yule*, *yawn*, *yare*, *yap*, *yell*, *yif*, *yon*, *young*.

Having said thus much on the formation of our elementary sounds, we will now consider in what way and to what extent they may be rendered useful, in embellishing and perfecting the rhythm.

If, as is often the case, besides the idea which the usage of language has connected with certain words, there are others which are naturally associated with the sounds or with the peculiarities of their formation, it is obvious, that the impression on the mind must be the most vivid, when the natural associations can be made to coincide with such as are merely artificial and conventional. In all languages there are certain words in which this coincidence is perfect. In our own we have *hiss*, *kaw*, *bah*, and a few others, in which the natural sound so closely resembles the articulate sound which represents it, that many have fallen into the

<sup>1</sup> See note in the Appendix.

<sup>2</sup> [Fourteen.]

error of supposing the latter a mere imitation of the former. The number, however, of these imitative sounds in any language is but scanty, and the assistance they render is both obvious and vulgar. The delicate perceptions of the poet demand the gratification more frequently than it is supplied by the ordinary resources of language. It is by the command which he possesses over this noblest of all gifts (after reason) that he seeks to obtain it.

In the next section we shall trace some of the artifices which have been adopted to arrive at these imitative sounds ; and afterwards enquire how far the peculiarities which attend the formation of our letters, as regards the disposition and action of the organs, can assist us in the fit and suitable expression of the thought.

#### IMITATIVE SOUNDS.

“ There is found,” says Bacon, “ a similitude between the sound, that is made by inanimate bodies, or by animate bodies that have no voice articulate, and divers letters of articulate voices ; and commonly men have given such names to those sounds as do allude unto the articulate letters ; as trembling of water hath resemblance with the letter *l* ; quenching of hot metals with the letter *z* ; snarling of dogs with the letter *r* ; the noise of screech-owls with the letter *sh*, voice of cats with the diphthong *eu*, voice of cuckoos with the diphthong *ou*, sounds of strings with the diphthong *ng*.”—*Nat. History, Century II.* § 200.

When we pronounce the letter *l*, the breath in escaping under the side-teeth presses against the yielding tongue, which may be considered as fixed at its root and tip. The tongue, like other flaccid bodies in similar circumstances, vibrates with a slow and uncertain trembling. This strongly resembles the motion of water. “ Running waters,” Bacon elsewhere observes, “ represent to the ear a trembling noise, and in regals (where they have a pipe they call the nightingale-pipe, which containeth water), the sound hath a continual trembling ; and children have also little things they call cocks, which have water in them, and when they blow

or whistle in them, they yield a trembling noise."—*Id.* § 172. It is in this inequality of trepidation, that the resemblance above alluded to seems chiefly to consist. Our great poets afford us many beautiful examples; in the Witches' song we almost hear the bubbling of the cauldron;

For a charm of powerful *trouble*,  
Like a *hell-broth boil and bubble*.  
ALL. *Double, double toil and trouble*,  
Fire burn and *cauldron bubble*. *Macb.* 4. 1. 18.

Not less happy are the following passages,

Gloster stumbled, and in falling  
Struck me, that thought to stay him, overboard  
Into the *tumbling billows* of the main. *R. III.* 1. 4. 18.

Fountains, and ye that *warble* as ye *flow*,  
*Melodious* murmurs, *warbling* tune his praise.  
*P. L.* 5. 195.

The hypothesis that has been ventured as to the origin of the resemblance, thus noticed by Bacon, is strengthened by observing, that our poets always affect this letter, whenever they have to describe a yielding wavy motion. The tie, which links such an association with the letter *l*, is obvious.

—— Part huge of bulk,  
*Wallowing unwieldy*, enormous in their gait,  
Tempest the ocean. *P. L.* 7. 410.

Some of serpent kind,  
Wond'rous in *length* and *corpulence*, involved  
Their *snaky folds*. *P. L.* 7. 482.

The one seem'd woman to the waist, and fair,  
But ended *foul*, in many a *scaly fold*  
*Voluminous* and vast. *P. L.* 2. 650.

*R*, though a trembling letter, has a character of sound differing in many particulars from that of *l*. In the first place it has a narrow sound, not unlike *e*, while that of *l* is a decidedly broad one. In the second place the vibrations, instead of being slow and uncertain like those of *l*, are quick and decided. Its sound was likened, even by Roman critics, to the snarling of the dog; but it has a resemblance to *any* narrow sound, which is broken in upon by short quick in-

terraptions. Hence its power in expressing harsh, grating, and rattling noises.

In the two first of the following examples, the roll of a liquid mass is beautifully contrasted with the harsh rattle of rock or shingle, on which it is supposed to act.

As burning *Ætna* from his boiling stew  
Doth belch out flames, and *rocks* in pieces *broke*,  
And *ragged ribs* of mountains molten new,  
Enwrap in cole-black clouds. F. Q. 1. 11. 44.

— As *raging* seas are wont to *roar*,  
When *wintry storm* his *wrathful wreck* does *threat*,  
The rolling billows beat the *ragged shore*.  
F. Q. 1. 11. 21.

With clamour thence the *rapid currents* drive  
Tow'rds the *retreating* sea their *furious* tide.  
P. L. 11. 853.

— As an aged tree . . . .  
Whose heart-strings with keen steel nigh hewen be,  
The mighty *trunk*, half rent with *ragged rift*,  
Doth roll adown the *rocks* and fall with *fearful drift*.  
F. Q. 1. 8. 22.

And she whom once the semblance of a scar  
Appall'd, an owlet's *larum* chill'd with *dread*,  
Now views the column-scatt'ring bay'net jar.  
Childe Harold, 1. 54.

— On a sudden open fly  
With impetuous recoil and *jarring* sound  
Th' *infernal doors*, and on their hinges *grate*  
*Harsh thunder*.  
P. L. 2. 879.

The *brazen throat* of war had ceas'd to *roar*,  
All now was turn'd to jollity and game. P. L. 11. 713.

— The *raven* himself is *hoarse*,  
That *croaks* the fatal *enterance* of Duncan  
Under my battlements. Macbeth, 1. 4. 39.

— Such *bursts* of *horrid thunder*,  
Such *groans* of *roaring* wind and *rain*, I never  
Remember to have heard. Lear, 3. 2. 45.

The sounds represented in the three last examples are not only harsh and grating, but deep and full; the narrow

sound of the *r* is therefore corrected by the broad vowels in *roar, hoarse, groans, &c.*

Bacon likens the sound of *s* to the quenching of hot metals, and that of *sh* to the noise of screech-owls. The fact is that the sounds represented by *s, zh, s, sh*, are all more or less sibilant, and accordingly have a greater or less affinity to any sound of the like character. Now there are a variety of noises, which though not absolutely hisses, yet approach near to them in the sharpness and shrillness of their sound, as shrieks, screeches, the whistling of man or other animals. All these resemble more or less the hissing sound of the sibilants.

They *saw*—but, other *sight instead!* a crowd  
Of ugly *serpents*; horror on them fell  
And horrid *sympathy*; for, what they *saw*,  
They felt themselves now changing; down their *arms*,  
Down fell both *spear* and *shield*, down they *as fast*,  
And the dire *hiss* renew'd. P. L. 10. 538.

—— Dreadful was the din  
Of *hissing* through the hall, thick *swarming* now  
With complicated *monsters*, head and tail,  
*Scorpion* and *asp*, and *amphisbæna* dire,  
*Cerastes* horn'd, *hydras* and *elops* drear,  
And *dipsas* (not so thick *swarm'd* once the *soil*,  
Bedropt with blood of gorgon). P. L. 10. 521.

The hoarse night-raven, trump of doleful drere,  
The leather-winged bat, day's enemy,  
The rueful strich still waiting on the bier,  
The *whistler shrill* that *whoso hears* doth die.  
F. Q. 2. 12. 36.

By *whispering winds* soon lull'd asleep. L'Allegro, 116.

The breezy call of incense-breathing morn,  
The *swallow* twitt'ring from the *straw-built shed*,  
The *cock's shrill* clarion, or the echoing horn,  
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.  
Gray, Elegy, st. 5.

And with *sharp shrilling shrieks* do bootless cry.  
F. Q. 2. 12. 36.

Now air is hush'd, save where the weak-ey'd bat,  
With *short shrill shriek* flits by on leathern wing.  
Collins's Evening, st. 3.

It will be observed that in several of these examples the sharp sound of the sibilant is strengthened by that of the narrow vowels, long *e* and short *i*. These vowels are sometimes used with effect even by themselves.

— The clouds were fled,  
*Driv'n* by a *keen* north *wind*, that, blowing dry  
 Wrinkled the face of deluge. 36  
P. L. 11. 841.

— The threaten sails,  
 Borne with th' *invisible* and *creeping* *wind*,  
 Draw the huge bottoms through the furrow'd sea.  
H. V. 3. Chorus, 9.

The broad vowel-sounds on the contrary, long *a*, *au*, long and short *o*, together with the broad diphthong *ou*, are used to express deep and hollow sounds ;

— A dreadful *sound*,  
 Which through the wood *loud bellowing* did *rebound*.  
F. Q. 1. 7. 7.

— The thunder . . . ceases now  
 To *bellow* through the *vast* and *boundless* deep.  
P. L. 1. 176.

All these and *thousand thousands* many *more*,  
 And *more deformed* *monsters* *thousand-fold*,  
 With dreadful noise and *hollow* *rombling* *sound*  
 Came rushing. — F. Q. 2. 12. 25.

— As the *sound* of *waters* deep,  
*Hoarse* murmurs echoed to his words *applause*.  
P. L. 5. 872.

The very expression a *hollow* sound shows how close is the association of a hollow space with depth and fullness of sound. Hence the broad vowels are sometimes used to express mere breadth and concavity.

So high as heav'd the tumid hills, so low  
 Down sunk a *hollow* *bottom*, *broad* and deep.  
P. L. 7. 288.

— Hell at last,  
*Yawning* received them *whole*, and on them *close'd*.  
P. L. 6. 874.

The observation of Bacon relative to the sound of *ng* may be generalized in like manner. There is no doubt that all

the three nasals have a close affinity to any deep low sound; such as a hum, a murmur, or the twang of a musical string slowly vibrating. The reason I take to be the distinctness with which the vibrations of the voice are heard in pronouncing these letters, and the low deep tone in which they are generally spoken.

—— Through the foul *womb* of night  
The *hum* of either *army* stilly *sounds*.

*H, V. 4. Chorus, 4.*

The shard-borne beetle with his drowsy *hums*  
Hath rung night's yawning peal. *Macbeth, 3. 2. 42.*

—— Where the beetle winds  
His small but sullen horn,  
As oft he rises 'midst the twilight path  
Against the *pilgrim borne* in heedless *hum*.  
*Collins, Evening, st. 4.*

The *hum-cock humm'd* wi' lazy *drone*,  
The kye stood rowtin i' the loan. *Burns, Two Dogs.*

Where each old poetic mountain  
Inspiration breath'd around,  
Every shade and hallowed fountain  
*Murmur'd* deep a *solemn sound*.  
*Gray, Progress of Poesy, ii. 3.*

Even Johnson, notwithstanding the ridicule he has thrown upon enquiries of this nature, has admitted that particular images may be "adumbrated by an exact and perceptible resemblance of sound." But the law of resemblance—that first great law of association—is not to be confined thus narrowly. If the mere sound of the words *hiss* and *bah* recall the cry of the animal, so may the muscular action, which the organs exert in pronouncing the words *struggle*, *wrestle*, call up in the mind the play of muscle and sinew, usual in those encounters. Wherever there is resemblance there may be association. We will now enquire what means our poets have used to *fix* their associations in the reader's mind, more especially in those cases, in which the connecting link has been the disposition or the action of the organs.

In the first place, we may observe that in making any



continued muscular effort, we draw in the breath and compress the lips firmly. Now this is the very position in which we place the organs, when pronouncing the letters *b*, *p*. I have no doubt that to this source may be traced much of the beauty of the following verses.

*Behemoth, biggest born of earth, upheav'd*  
His vastness—

*P. L. 7. 471.*

The mountains huge appear  
Emergent, and their *broad bare backs upheave*  
Into the clouds.

*P. L. 7. 285.*

The envious flood  
Kept in my soul, and would not let it forth . . .  
But smother'd it within my *panting bulk*,  
Which almost *burst* to *belch* in the sea. *R. III. 1. 4. 37.*

—— But first from inward grief  
His *bursting passion* into *plaints* thus *pour'd*. *P. L. 9. 97.*

Who thrusting boldly twixt him and the blow,  
The *burden* of the deadly *brunt* did bear. *F. Q. 4. 8. 42.*

A grievous *burthen* was thy *birth* to me.  
*R. III. 4. 4. 167.*

When the mind is seiz'd with fear and amazement, the lips open and voice fails us. If the surprize be sudden, a whispered ejaculation escapes, suppress'd almost as soon as utter'd. In this way I would account for that combination of letters *st*, which Spenser and others of our older poets affect, whenever they have to describe this feeling. Its fitness for the purpose seems to lie in the sudden stop, which is given by the *t* to the whisper sound of the *s*—letters, be it observed, which are formed without the agency of the lips.

The giant self, dismayed with that sound, . . .  
In haste came rushing forth from inner bow'r,  
With staring countenance *stern*, as one *astound*,  
And *staggering steps*, to weet what sudden *stour*  
Had wrought that horror *strange* and dar'd his dreaded pow'r.

*F. Q. 1. 8. 5.*

*Stern* was their look ; like wild amazed *steers*,  
*Staring* with hollow eyes and *stiff upstanding* hairs.  
*F. Q. 2. 9. 13.*

He answer'd not at all, but adding new  
 Fear to his first amazement, *staring* wide  
 With *stony* eyes, and heartless hollow hue,  
*Astonish'd stood.*

*F. Q. 1. 9. 24.*

When too the sinews are overstretched, or shaken with sharp and jerking efforts, the same kind of broken breathing generally follows the strain upon them. The sound too is harsh and grating. Hence, in part at least, the effect produced by the combinations *st*, *str*, in the following passages ;

*Staring* full *ghastly* like a *strangled* man,  
 His hair uprear'd, his *nostrils stretched* with *struggling*,  
 His hands abroad display'd, as one that grasp'd  
 And tugg'd for life.

*H. VI. 3. 2. 170.*

But th' heedful boatman *strongly* forth did *stretch*  
 His brawny arms, and all his body *strain*. *F. Q. 2. 12. 21.*

There is little doubt, however, that the *chief* link of association in these passages is the difficult muscular action, which is call'd into play in the pronunciation of *str*.

Under the influence of fear the voice sinks into a whisper. Hence in describing that passion, or such conduct as it generally accompanies—deceit or caution—we find the whisper-letters peculiarly effective.

With sturdy steps came stalking in his sight  
 An *hideous* giant, *horrible* and *high*.

*F. Q. 1. 7. 8.*

The knight himself e'en trembled at his fall,  
 So *huge* and *horrible* a mass it seem'd.

*F. Q. 1. 11. 55.*

So daunted when the giant saw the knight,  
 His *heavy hand* he *heaved* up on *high*.

*F. Q. 1. 7. 14.*

And pious awe, that *fear'd* to have *offended*.

*P. L. 5. 135.*

His *fraud* is then thy *fear*, which plain *infers*  
 Thy equal *fear* that my *firm faith* and love  
 Can by his *fraud* be shaken and seduc'd.

*P. L. 9. 285.*

*Fit* vessel, *fittest* imp of *fraud*, in whom  
 To enter, and his dark suggestions hide.

*P. L. 9. 89.*

The whisper-letters *p*, *t*, are sometimes used at the end of words with great effect, in representing an interrupted

action. The impossibility of dwelling upon these letters, and the consequently sharp and sudden termination which they give to those words into which they enter, will sufficiently explain their influence.

Till an unusual *stop* of sudden silence  
Gave respite.

*Comus*, 552.

Sudden he *stops*, his eye is *fix'd*, away!  
Away! thou heedless boy.

*Childe Harold*, 1. 76.

———— All unawares  
Fluttering his pinions vain, *plumb* down he *drops*  
Ten thousand fathom deep.

*Par. Lost*, 2. 933.

•———— The pilgrim oft  
At dead of night, mid his oraison, hears  
Aghast the voice of time, disparting tow'rs,  
Tumbling all precipitate, down-*dash'd*,  
Rattling aloud, loud thundering to the moon.

*Dyer's Ruins of Rome*, 39.

Little effort is wanted, as Johnson once observed, to make our language harsh and rough. It cost Milton no trouble to double his consonants, and load his line with rugged syllables, when he described the mighty conflict between his angels.

But soon obscur'd with smoke, all heav'n appear'd,  
From those deep-throated engines belch'd, whose roar  
Embowell'd with outrageous noise the air,  
And all her entrails tore, disgorging foul  
Their dev'lish glut, chain'd thunderbolts and hail  
Of iron globes.

*P. L.* 6. 585.

But when he chose, he could also glide upon his vowels and make his language as smooth as the Italian.

And all the while harmonious airs were heard.

*P. R.* 2. 362.

With what all earth or heaven could bestow  
*To make her amiable, on she came.*

*P. L.* 8. 483.

———— The serpent sly  
*Insinuating wove with Gordian twine*  
His braided train.

*P. L.* 4. 348.

Milton's verses, however, lose half their beauty when thus insulated. It is a remark of Cowper, that a rough line

seems to add a greater smoothness to the others ; and no one better knew the advantages of contrast than Milton. There can be little doubt that many of his harsher verses, some of which contain merely a bead-roll of names, were introduced for the sole purpose of heightening the melody of the lines which followed.

## CHAPTER III.

## SYLLABLE.

The definition of a scientific term is seldom aided by its etymology. According to the Greek derivation, a syllable means a *collection of letters*, according to the Celtic<sup>1</sup> a *verbal element*. The first of these must have suggested to Priscian his well-known definition. The Latin grammarian pronounces a syllable, to be a collection of letters bearing the same accent, and formed by one impulse of the breath. Scaliger, more simply, and I think more sensibly, defines it to be a verbal element falling under one accent.

The objection which attaches to both these definitions is the vagueness of the word *accent*. Among the Greeks and Latins accent meant *tone*, with us it means something widely different. There are also Greek syllables which receive both a grave and a sharp tone. It is true we call this union of the tones a circumflex, but this is merely an evasion of the difficulty; or rather, we should say, it is a loose expression, on which an erroneous definition has been grounded. I am also far from sure that our English accent in all cases pervades the syllable. On some letters the stress is certainly more obvious than on others. These difficulties might be avoided, by defining a syllable to be a word or verbal element, which for rhythmical purposes is considered as having only one accent.

Properly, every syllable ought to have a distinct vowel sound. Such is the rule which prevailed in the Greek and

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<sup>1</sup> In Welsh, *eb* is an utterance; *fraeth* an oration, *fraeth* eloquent; *dir* a proverb, *dir* true; *galareb* a voice of mourning, *galar* mourning; *graeth* a climax, *graeth* a step; *silleb* an elementary part of speech, a syllable, *sill* an element. Hence the Norman *syllabe*, and our English *syllable*. [But see note in the Appendix.]

Latin, and I believe also in our earlier dialect. At present it is different. Thus the word *heaven* is now considered as of two syllables, though it has but one vowel, the second syllable consisting merely of a consonantal sound.

It is probable that in the earlier periods of our language there was no such thing as a syllable thus merely consonantal. It is certain that the critics of Elizabeth's reign thought a vowel essential, and though many syllables were held to be doubtful, yet in all such cases there prevailed a difference of pronunciation, as to the number of the vowel-sounds. At present we have many words, such as *heaven*, *seven*, &c., which are used in our poetry sometimes as monosyllables, sometimes as dissyllables, yet in neither case have more than one vowel-sound. The only difference in the pronunciation is, that we rest somewhat longer upon the final consonant, when we use them as dissyllables. There can be little doubt that at an earlier period these words would, in such a case, have been pronounced with two vowel-sounds, *heav-en*, *sev-en*, &c., as they still are in some of our provincial dialects.

It is not quite easy to say, why all the early systems of syllabification should be thus dependent upon the number of the vowel-sounds. Every letter, except *p*, *t*, *k*, may be dwelt upon during a finite portion of time, and if we also except *b*, *d*, *g*, the consonants may be lengthened just as readily as the vowels. There is therefore only a partial objection to the system, which should even divide a word into its *literal* elements. If we excepted the six letters *b*, *d*, *g*, *p*, *t*, *k*, and joined them in pronunciation to those immediately preceding or succeeding, I can see no *a priori* objection to a system even thus simple. Musical composers take this liberty without scruple in adapting words to music, and often split a monosyllable into as many parts as it has letters.

The probable reason is the much greater importance of the vowel in the older dialects. In those languages which had a temporal rhythm, verse must have been spoken in a kind of recitative; and such to this day is the manner in which the Hindoos recite their Sanscrit poems. The more

grateful sound of the vowels would naturally point them out as best fitted for musical expression, and on these the notes would chiefly rest. Again, the tendency of language is to shorten the vowels. Most of our present short vowels were pronounced by the Anglo-Saxons with the middle<sup>1</sup> quantity, and some with the long. Those knots of consonants too, which are so frequent in our language, unloose themselves as we trace them upwards. The vowels reappear one after the other, and as we advance we find their quantity gradually lengthening. There are dissyllables which expand themselves, even within the Anglo-Saxon period, to six syllables, and the number might be doubled, if we traced them still further by the aid of the kindred dialects. This accumulation of consonants and shortening of the vowel made the voice rest the longer on the consonantal portion of the word, and seems at length to have paved the way for consonantal syllables.

In tracing the gradual extinction of our syllables, I shall first call the reader's attention to the final *e*. The loss of the initial syllable will then be considered; and afterwards the case of those vowels which have at any time melted into diphthongs, or have otherwise coalesced into one syllable. The loss of the vowel before different consonants will then be matter of investigation; and we shall conclude the chapter by noticing such syllables as are formed by the coalition of two or more distinct words.

#### FRENCH *e* FINAL.

The following are instances of French substantives which retained their final *e* after they were introduced into our language;

— Upon her knees she gan to falle,  
And with | sad coun | tenan | ce : knel | eth still,<sup>2</sup>  
Till she had herd, what was the lordes will.

*Chau. The Clerkes Tale; C. T. 8168.*

<sup>1</sup> See chap. V.

<sup>2</sup> The vertical line always follows an accented syllable, and the colon (:) indicates the place of the *middle pause*, of which we shall have to say more in Chapter VII.

As to my dome ther is non that is here  
Of El|oquen|ce : that | shall be | thy pere|.

*Chau. The Frankeleins Prologue; C. T. 10989.*

Than had|de he spent|: all | his philos|ophi|e,  
Ay Questio quid juris! wolde he crie.

*Chau. Prologue, 647.*

And God that sitteth hie in Majistee,  
Save all this com|pagni|e : gret | and smal|e,  
Thus have I quit the miller in my tale.

*Chau. The Reeves Tale; C. T. 4320.*

Till Erewyn wattir, fysche to tak, he went;  
Sic fan|tasi|e : fell | in his | entent. | *Wallace, i. 369.*

We find also this termination furnished with two syllables  
in the plural,

Min ben|also| : the mal|adi|es col|de,  
The derke tresons and the castes olde.

*Chau. The Knightes Tale; C. T. 2469.*

He was a jangler and a goliardeis,  
And that | was most|: of sin|ne and har|lotri|es,  
Wel coude he stelen corne and tollen thries.<sup>1</sup>

*Chau. Prologue, 562.*

We also have the *e*, which closes the French adjective.

—— This ilke noble quene  
On her shoulders gan sustene  
Both the armes, and the name  
Of tho | that had|de : larg|e fam|e.

*Chau. House of Fame, 3. 319.*

A larg|e man | he was | : with ey|en step|e,  
A fairer burgeis is ther non in Chepe.

*Chau. Prologue, 755.*

—— His conferred sovereignty was like  
A larg|e sail|: full | with a fore|right wind|<sup>2</sup>  
That drowns a smaller bark. *Fletcher, Prophetess, 5. 1.*

In rotten ribbed bark to passe the seas,  
The for|raine landes|: and straung|ie sites | to see|  
Doth daunger dwell. *Turbervile to his Friend P., st. 3.*

<sup>1</sup> *Thries* is always a dissyllable in Chaucer.

<sup>2</sup> [But some editions read : "A large | sail, fill'd | full with | a fore|-right wind|." This is far better.—W. W. S.]



ENGLISH *e* FINAL.

The most frequent vowel endings of Anglo-Saxon substantives were *a*, *e*, *u*. All the three were, in the fourteenth century, represented by the *e* final. We meet, however, with substantives in *e* which have two, and in some cases three, Anglo-Saxon substantives corresponding to them; and when we find all the three endings in Anglo-Saxon, it is difficult to say which is represented by the *e*. Even when we only know of one Anglo-Saxon ending, there is always a possibility of the others existing, though they may not have fallen within the compass of our reading. I shall first give examples of the *e* which answers to the Anglo-Saxon *a*.

All the Anglo-Saxon nouns in *a* are masculine, and belong to what Rask terms the first declension, as *nama* a name, *tíma* time, *móna* the moon.

And hast bejaped here duk Theseus,  
And fals|ely chang|ed hast|: thy *nam*|*e* thus|—  
*Chau. The Knightes Tale; C. T. 1585.*

A knight ther was, and that a worthy man,  
That fro | the *tim*|*e* : that | he first | began |  
To riden out, he loved chivalrie,  
Trough and honour, fredom and curtesie.  
*Chau. Prologue, 43.*

His sadel was of rewel bone,  
His bridel as the sonne shone,  
Or as | the *mon*|*e* light.  
*Chau. Sire Thopas; C. T. 13807.*

The Anglo-Saxon nouns in *e* belong to various genders and declensions. A great number of them are feminines and neuters belonging to the first declension. Among the feminine nouns are *sunne* the sun, *heorte* the heart, *rose* the rose; *eare* the ear, is neuter. There are also masculine and neuter nouns in *e*, which belong to other declensions.

———— Thus the day they spende  
In rev|el, till|: the *son*|*ne* gan|descend|e.  
*Chau. The Clerkes Tale; C. T. 8267.*

And thus | with good | hope : and | with *hert* | *e* blith |  
They taken hir leave.

*Chau. The Knightes Tale ; C. T. 1880.*

And fresher than the May with flowres newe,  
For | with the *ros* | *e* col | our : strof | hire hew | *e*.

*Chau. The Knightes Tale ; C. T. 1039.*

—— He smote me ones with his fist, .  
For that I rent out of his book a lefe,  
That | of the stroke | : myn *er* | *e* wex | al defe. |

*Chau. The Wif of Bathes Prol. ; C. T. 6216.*

Nouns in *u* were generally feminine, as *scolu* school, *lufu* love, *sceamu* shame, *lagu* law; but there were also some masculines belonging to another declension, as *sunu* a son, *wudu* a wood, &c.

Full soth | is sayd | : that *lov* | *e* ne | lordship |  
Wol nat, his thankes, have no felawship.

*Chau. The Knightes Tale ; C. T. 1625.*

It is | a *sham* | *e* : that | the pe | ple shal |  
So scorned thee.

*Chau. The Second Nunnes Tale ; C. T. 15973.*

With empty womb of fasting many a day  
Receiv | ed he | the *law* | *e* : that | was writ | en  
With Goddes finger, and Eli, wel ye witen, . . .  
He fasted long.

*Chau. The Sompnoures Tale ; C. T. 7470.*

No maister, sire, quod he, but servitour,  
Though | I have had | in *scol* | *e* : that | honour |.

*Chau. The Sompnoures Tale ; C. T. 7767.*

Befor | *e* hire stood | : hire *son* | *e* Cup | ido |  
Upon his shoulders winges hadde he two.

*Chau. The Knightes Tale ; C. T. 1965.*

And as she cast her eie aboute,  
She sigh clad in one sute a route  
Of ladies, wher they comen ride  
A | longe un | der : the *wood* | *de* sid | *e*.

*Gower, C. A. bk. iv.*

We also have the Anglo-Saxon ending *-the*, a distinct syllable.

And wel I wot, withouten help or grace  
Of thee, | ne may | my *streng* | *the* : not | avail | *le*.

*Chau. The Knightes Tale ; C. T. 2402.*

I preise wel thy wit,  
 Quod the Frank|elein|: consid|ering | thy you|the  
 So felingly thou spekest, sire, I alone thee  
 As to my dome, ther is non that is here  
 Of eloquence that shal be thy pere.

*Chau. The Frankeleines Prol.; C. T. 10986.*

Such of these endings as survived till the sixteenth century changed the *e* for *y*, and were gradually confounded with the adjectives of that termination. There can be little doubt that the *helly* and *woody* of the following extracts were the Anglo-Saxon *helle* (gen. case) and *wudu*.

Free Helicon and franke Parnassus hylls  
 Are hel|ly haunts|: and ranke | pernicious ylls|.

*Baldwin; M. for M.; Collingbourne, 2.*

—— The sat|yrs scorn | their wood|y kind|,  
 And henceforth nothing fair but her on earth they find.

*Fairy Queen, l. 6. 18.*

There were a few Anglo-Saxon adjectives, which ended in *e*, as *ge-trewe* true, *niwe* new.

A trew|e swink|er : and|a good | was he|,  
 Living in pees and parfite charitee. *Chau. Prologue, 533.*

And swore | his oth|: as | he was trew|e knight|.

*Chau. The Knightes Tale; C. T. 961.*

She was wel more blissful on to see  
 Than is | the new|e : per|jenet|e tree.

*Chau. The Milleres Tale; C. T. 3247.*

An adverb was also formed from the adjective by the addition of an *e*; a formation which flourished in the time of Chaucer, and cannot be considered even now as obsolete. The *e* has indeed vanished, and the word, thus robbed of a syllable, is considered merely as the adjective used adverbially. It is, however, the legitimate though corrupt descendant of the old adverb, and such root has it taken in the language, that not all the efforts of our grammarians have been able to weed it out.

And | in a cloth | of gold|: that brigh|te shone|,  
 With a coroune of many a riche stone,  
 Upon hire hed, they into hall hire broughte.

*Chau. The Clerkes Tale; C. T. 8993.*

Command|eth him|: and *fas*|*te* blewe | the fire|.

*Chau. Chanones Yemannes Tale; C. T. 16728.*

Wel | coude he sit|te on hors|: and *fayr*|*e* rid|e.

*Chau. The Prologue, 93.*

There is, however, one caution to be given. The superlative of the adjective ends in *ste*, that of the adverb in *st*.

A knight ther was, and that | a worthy man,

That | fro the tim|e : that | he *first*<sup>1</sup> | began|

To riden out, he loved chivalrie. *Chau. Prologue, 43.*

#### THE *e* OF INFLEXION.

In the history of literature there are few things more remarkable than the position which is now occupied by Chaucer. For the last three centuries he has been read and praised and criticised, yet neither reader, eulogist, nor critic, has thought fit to investigate his language. When does he inflect his substantive? when his adjective? These are questions, which obtrude themselves in the study of every language, yet who has ventured to answer for our early English?

One of the difficulties in the way of this enquiry, is the number of dialects, which prevailed in the country from the eleventh to the fifteenth century. There is a wide distinction between the language of Layamon and of Chaucer, yet it is by no means easy to say whether this marks a difference of dialect, or is merely the change which our language underwent in the course of two centuries. I shall therefore confine myself to the dialect of our earliest classic, and notice the language of other writers, only as they serve for the purposes of illustration.

In the time of Layamon the dative singular in *e* still survived. I suspect this dative had become obsolete before the time of Chaucer; yet there are lines which it is difficult to account for without its assistance. Thus, in the couplet which opens the poem,

Whanne that April with his shoures sote

The drought of March had perced to the rote—

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<sup>1</sup> [Printed *firste* in the former edition, because so printed by Tyrwhitt; but, by the argument, there ought to be no final *e*.—W. W. S.]

there is little doubt that *rote* is a dissyllable, for it rimes with *sote*, which seems clearly to be the plural adjective agreeing with *shoures*. Now the common form of this substantive is a monosyllable *rot*, and unless *rote* be its dative we must conclude there is another substantive *rote* of two syllables—a conclusion which, though I would not contradict it, seems improbable.<sup>1</sup> If however Chaucer used the dative, it must have been so rarely as much to lessen the value of this discussion.

There seems to be no doubt that Chaucer used the old genitive plural in *a*, the final vowel being represented, as in other cases, by *e*. We find in old English *menne*, *horse*, *othe*, answering to the Anglo-Saxon *manna*, *horsa*, *átha*, the respective genitives plural of *man*, *hors*, and *áth*.

Tuelf feren he hadde  
That he with him ladde  
Al | le rich | e *men* | e son | es,  
And alle suythe feyre gomes.

*Geste of King Horn*, 19.

For ye aren men of this molde, that most wide walken  
And knowen countries and courtes, and menye kinne places,  
Both princ | es pal | eis : and pou | re *men* | ne cot | es.

*Piers Plowman*, C. xi. 14.

— Everie year this freshe Maie  
These lustie ladies ride aboute,  
And I must nedes sewe her route  
In this maner, as ye now see,  
And trusse her halteres forth with mee,  
And | am but | her *hors* | e knav | e.

*Gower. Confessio Amantis*, bk. iv.

That is, “and I am only their horses’ groom.”—in Anglo-Saxon, *heora horsa cnapa*.

We now come to a verse which both Urry and Tyrwhitt have done their best to spoil. Chaucer begins his exquisite portrait of the Prioress with these lines ;

Ther was also a nonne, a Prioeresse,  
That of hire smiling was ful simple and coy,  
Hire gret | est *oth* | e : n’as | but by | seint Loy.

*Prologue*, 120.

<sup>1</sup> See note in the Appendix. \*

Where *othe* is the genitive plural after the superlative, "her greatest of oaths." The flow of the verse is as soft as the gentle being the poet is describing. But its beauty was lost on the Editors. They seem to have shrunk from making *othe* a dissyllable (a reluctance that would be perfectly right if that word were in the nominative), and so, without the authority of a single manuscript, they introduced this jerking substitute ;

Hire gret|est othe | : n'as | but by Seint | Eloy|—

a change which not only mars the rhythm of one of the sweetest passages that Chaucer ever wrote, but also brings us acquainted with a new saint. "Sweet Saint Loy" was well known, but I never met with St. Eloy in English verse.<sup>1</sup>

The plural adjective takes *e* for its inflexion, as the Anglo-Saxon endings would lead us to expect. In illustrating this and the following rules, I shall, as much as possible, select examples which contain the adjective both with and without its inflexion. The reason for so doing is obvious.

Men loveden more derknessis than light, for her werkis weren *yuele*,  
for ech man that doith *yuel* hatith the light. *Wiclif. Jon. 3, 19.*

In these lay a gret multitude of *syke* men, *blinde*, crokid, and *drye*.  
*Wiclif. Jon. 5, 3.*

A frere there was, a wanton and a mery,  
A limitour, a ful solemne man,  
In all the orders foure is non that can  
So much of daliance and fayr langage . . . .  
His tippet was ay farsed full of knives  
And pin|nes for to giv|en : *fayr*|*e* wiv|es.  
*Chau. Prologue, 208.*

<sup>1</sup> When the English guns swept off the famished Frenchman as he was gathering his muscles, Churchyard tells us

Some deerely bought their muskels evry weeke,  
Some sacrifice their horse to *sweets Saynot Loy*.  
*Siege of Leith, st. 50.*

Lindsay, indeed, in one of his poems, has written the word at full length Eloy, but, I have little doubt, elided the *e* in pronunciation. [See my note in the Appendix.—W. W. S.]

In *ol* | *de* day | es : of | the king | Artour, |  
Of which that Bretons speke gret honour.

*The Wif of Bathes Tale*; C. T. 6439.

When the adjective follows the definite article *the*, or the definite pronouns *this*, *that*, or any one of the possessive pronouns, it takes what is called its definite form. In the Anglo-Saxon, the definite adjective differs from the other in its mode of declension; in the old English the only difference is the final *e*.

How may ony man entre into the house of a strong man, and take awei hise vesselis, but he first bynde the *stronge* man, &c.

*Wiclif. Matt. 12, 29.*

At Leyes was he, and at Satalie,  
Whan | they were won | ne : and in | the *gret* | *e* see |  
At many a noble armee had he be. *Chau. Prologue, 58.*

Wel | can the *wis* | *e* po | et : of | Floren | ce,  
That highte Dant, speken of this sentence.  
*Chau. Wif of Bathes Tale*; C. T. 6307.

And up | he rid | eth : to | the *high* | *e* bord |.  
*Chau. The Squiers Tale*; C. T. 10399.

Sike<sup>1</sup> lay this husbondman, whos that the place is. . . .  
O der | *e* mais | ter : quod | this *sik* | *e* man |,  
How have ye faren sin that March began.  
*Chau. The Sompnoures Tale*; C. T. 7550.

White<sup>2</sup> was hire smok, and brouded all before,  
And eke behind, on hire colere aboute,  
Of coleblak silk, within and eke withoute.  
The tap | es of | : hire *whit* | *e* vol | uper | *e*  
Were of the same suit of hire colere.  
*Chau. The Milleres Tale*; C. T. 3238.

These rules prevail very widely in the Gothic dialects. They will not, however, explain all the cases in which the definite adjective is used, either in the Anglo-Saxon or in the old English dialect. The subject is too difficult and extensive to be discussed here. We will, however, notice

<sup>1</sup> [So printed by Tyrwhitt; but wrongly, as the argument shews. Read *Sik*.—W. W. S.]

<sup>2</sup> [So printed by Tyrwhitt; but wrongly, as the argument shews. Read *Whit*.—W. W. S.]

one rule, which may be of importance to the grammar of both these languages. The passive participle, and those adjectives which partake of its character, may, I think, be treated at any time as indeclinable. We shall find many examples, when we examine the rhythms of our Anglo-Saxon poets.

Of the old English verb, as used by Chaucer, it may be observed, that the first person singular and the three persons plural of the present tense end in *e*; so also the imperative mood<sup>1</sup> and the infinitive;

I *put*|te me | : in thy | protec|tion,|  
Diane! and in thy disposition.

*Chau. Knights Tale; C. T. 2365.*

In olde dayes of the king Artour,  
Of which | that Bret|ons *spek*|e : gret | honour|.

*Chau. Wif of Bathes Tale; C. T. 6439.*

Than longen folk to gon on pilgrimages,  
And palmers for to seken strange strondes,  
To *ser*|*ve*<sup>2</sup> hal|wes : counth | in sun|dry lond|es.

*Chau. Prologue, 12.*

The past tense generally ends in *de* or *ede*, but sometimes it is the same as the participle in *d* or *ed*. I believe these two forms of the perfect to be independent, and not derived the one from the other. We shall not stop to discuss the question, but I cannot pass by the strange hypothesis of Tyrwhitt. That critic supposes the *de* to be the same as *ed*, with a transference of the vowel; representing in short the ending intermediate between the old termination and the present. Every one, who has opened an Anglo-Saxon grammar, knows, that *de* is the old and proper termination of the perfect, and though I will not assert that the other was never used by the Anglo-Saxons (indeed, I think I have actually met with it in one or two instances), yet every English scholar is aware, that it was only a short time

<sup>1</sup> [Not always; it depends on the verb. Thus *let* has no final *e* in *Ch. C. T.* 923.—W. W. S.]

<sup>2</sup> [The right reading is *ferne*, pl. adj. But see *ride* (*Ch. Prolog.* 27) riming with *vide*, pl. adj.—W. W. S.]



before Chaucer, that it played any considerable part in our language.

As I have more than once spoken of Tyrwhitt, in terms very different from the eulogies which are commonly paid him, I would make one observation. I admit that when an art is in a state of advancement, such as is the present state of English criticism, it is disingenuous to dwell upon the casual blunders, or the minute inaccuracies of those who have preceded us. Tyrwhitt deserves our thanks for the manly experiment of editing our oldest classic, and for accumulating a decent share of general knowledge, to serve for his occasional elucidation. But what *can* we say of an editor who will not study the language of his author?—of one, who having the means of accuracy (at least to a great extent) within reach, passes them by, and judges of Chaucer's grammar in the fourteenth century by that of Pope in the eighteenth? A Dane or Norwegian, with a competent knowledge of Anglo-Saxon, would have been a better judge of Chaucer's syntax than his English editor.

That Chaucer sometimes dropt the *e* final is certain. *Hire* is always a monosyllable, whether it represents the A.S. *hire* (her) or the A.S. *heora* (their). It was also lost in other cases when it followed *r*, and *perhaps* when it followed other letters, though I would not assert as much, without the benefit of a better edition than Tyrwhitt's. Many French writers in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries discarded *their e* final; some more generally than others. Marot, who wrote in the reign of Francis, dropt it in three cases, and in three only. The day will no doubt come, when we shall be able to give a list of all the words, in which Chaucer has taken the same liberty.<sup>1</sup>

#### INITIAL SYLLABLE.

In the present section, we shall treat of such initial syl-

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<sup>1</sup> [It has come. Professor Child, of Harvard College, has collected all the instances of the final *e*, as occurring in the "Canterbury Tales." See also Ellis's "Early English Pronunciation."—W. W. S.]

lables as have occasionally disappeared from our language,  
and will begin with the initial vowel ;

He'll woo | a thou|sand : 'point | the day | of mar|riage,  
Make friends, invite friends, and proclaim the bands,  
Yet never means to wed. *Taming of the Shrew*, 3. 2. 14.

I'll not | be tied | to hours | : nor 'point|ed times |.  
*Taming of the Shrew*, 3. 1. 19.

And keep | your times | I 'point | you : for | I'll tell | you  
A strange way you must wade through.  
*Fletcher. The Mad Lover*, 4. 2.

That I am guiltless of your father's death,  
It shall | as lev|el : to | your judg|ment 'pear|,<sup>1</sup>  
As death doth to your eye. *Hamlet*, 4. 5. 151.

No faith | so fast, | quoth she | : but flesh | does 'pair|,  
Flesh may impair, quoth he, but reason can repair.  
*F. Q.* 1. 7. 41.

The wrath|ful win|ter : 'proch|ing on | apace|,  
With blustering blasts had all ybarde the treene.  
*Sackville. M. for Mag. The Induction*, 1.

His owne dear wife, whom as his life he loved,  
Hee durst | not trust, | : nor 'proche | unto | her bed|.  
*Sackville. M. for M. Buckingham*, 45.

— When he had done the thing he sought,  
And as | he would | : 'com|plisht and com|past all.  
*Sackville. M. for M. Buckingham*, 53.

Therefore have done, and shortly spede your pace,  
To 'quaynt | yourselve | : and com|pany | with grace|.  
*Barclay. Schip of Foles, Of Mockers*, st. 2.

Lay fear aside, let nothing thee amaze,  
Ne have | despaire | : ne 'scuse | the want | of time|.  
*Higgins. M. for Mag. King Albanact*, 2.

— I shifted him away,  
And laid | good 'scuse | : upon | your ec|stacy|.  
*Othello*, 4. 1. 80.

From temple's top, where did Apollo dwell,  
I 'sayd | to flye : | but on | the church | I fell|.  
*Higgins. M. for Mag. King Bladud*, 22.

<sup>1</sup> [The Globe edition has *pierce*.—W. W. S.]

Several verbs, even at this day, are used sometimes with, and sometimes without the vowel, as to *espy*, to *escape*, to *establish*, &c.

There are also substantives that throw away the vowel. *Apprentice* has been pronounced *prentice* from the days of Chaucer to the present; *apothecary*, also, and *imagination*, not unfrequently lost their first syllables;

Be | not abused | with priests | : nor 'poth|ecar|ies,  
They cannot help thee. *Fletcher. Valentinian, 5. 2.*

Thus time we waste and longest leagues make short,  
Sail seas in cockles, have an wish but for't,  
Mak|ing, to take | : your 'mag|ina|tion,|  
From bourn to bourn, region to region. *Per. 4. 4. 1.*

My brain, methinks, is as an hourglass,  
Wherein | my 'mag|ina|tions : run | like sands |.  
*Ben Jonson. Every Man in his Humour, 3. 3.*

Words compounded with the old preposition *a*, often lost it in pronunciation; <sup>1</sup>

My lord, I shall reply amazedly,  
Half *sleep*, | half wak|ing : but | as yet | I swear|  
I cannot truly say how I came here. *M. N. D. 4. 1. 142.*

But home-bred broiles call back the conquering king,  
Warres thun|der 'bout | : the Brit|aine coasts | doth ring|.  
*Niccols. M. for M. Arthur. The Argument, l. 7.*

#### THE INITIAL *be*.

This prefix is found elided in the works of almost all our dramatists, but in some cases there is reason to believe, that the word which is represented thus shorn of a syllable, is in fact the root of the compound, instead of being its remnant. We find *'long* not unfrequently written for *belong*, and sometimes we have the word written at full length, although the rhythm requires but one syllable. Now, even in Chaucer's time, *long* was used in the same sense without the prefix, or any mark of elision; and, as both Dutch and Germans have *lang-en*, to reach at, the probability is that

<sup>1</sup> So also we have *live*, adj., for *alive*; and *lone* for *alone*.

*long* is an independent verb. *Gin*, though sedulously written '*gin*, and sometimes *begin* by modern editors, may also be traced back to the times of Wiclif and Chaucer. I do not however recollect meeting with it in Anglo-Saxon ; another of its compounds, *onginn-an*, being generally used. The elisions which follow are among the least doubtful ;

Let pit|y not | be believ|ed : there | she shook|  
The holy water from her heavenly eyes. *Lear*, 4. 3. 31.

And believe | me, gen|tle youth| : tis I | weep for | her.  
*Fletcher. Loyal Subject*, 5. 2.

Now, Sir, if ye have friends enow,  
Though re|al friends| : I b'lieve, | are few|,  
Yet if your catalogue be fu',

I'se no insist ;

But gif ye want ae friend that's true,

I'm on your list.

*Burns. Epistle to Lapraik*, st. 15.

With these domestic traitors, bosom-thieves,  
Whom custom hath call'd wives ; the readiest helps  
To betray | the head|y hus|bands : rob | the eas|y.

*Ben Jonson. Catiline*, 3. 3.

Lo ! Demophon, Duke of Athenes,  
How he forswore him falsely,  
And trai|ed Phil|lis wick|edly.

*Chau. House of Fame*, 1. 388.

O belike | his maj|esty | : hath some | intent|  
That you should be new christened in the Tow'r.

*Richard III.* l. 1. 49.

Yet even in these cases there may be doubts as to the elision of any syllable. The Germans have *trieg-en*, to betray, why should not we have to *tray* ? The *b'lieve* however of Burns points clearly to the loss of a syllable, supposing that the word is, as it ought to be, written according to the pronunciation.

There are also certain adverbs and prepositions which are commonly written as though they had lost this prefix, '*fore*, '*cause*, &c. These, however, are found as monosyllables in some of our earliest English authors, and it would perhaps be safer to consider them as distinct words, and to write them accordingly.

We shall have less trouble with the prefix *dis*, than with the one we have just considered. Most of the words, into which it enters, have been derived from foreign sources, and their origin carefully traced and ascertained. Still, however, there is difficulty in fixing upon the *date* of the corruption. It is undoubtedly of a very early antiquity, and probably of the thirteenth century.

Each bush | a bar | : each spray | a ban | ner 'splayed, |  
Each house a fort, our passage to have stayed.

*Mirr. for Mag. Hastings, 16.*

——— A storm . . . .

In | to a cloud | of dust | : 'sperst | in the air |  
The weak foundations of this city fair.

*Spenser. Visions of Bellay, st. 14.*

And 'sdain | ful pride | : and wil | ful ar | rogance.

*Spenser. Mother Hubbard's Tale, 1135.<sup>1</sup>*

I 'sdained | subjec | tion : and | thought one | step high | er  
Would set me highest.

*P. L. 4. 50.*

And where Ardiens, tyrant vile !

His aged father 'stroyde.

*Higgins. M. for M. King Porrex, 12 (first version).*

Quhen | he is 'strest | : than | can he swym | at will |,  
Gret strenth he has, bathe wyt and grace thartill.

*Wallace, 5. 520.*

—— Hee thought by cruell feare to bring

His subjects under, as him liked best,

But loe | the dread | · wherewith | himself | was 'strest.

*Sackville, M. for M. Buckingham, 39.*

Labour had gi'en it up for good,

Save swains their folds that beetling stood,

While Echo, listning in the wood,

Each knock | kept 'stinct | ly count | ing.

*Clare, The Fountain, st. 2.*

But, as he nigher drew, he easly

Might 'scern | that it | was not | : his sweet | eat sweet |.

*F. Q. 3. 10. 22.*

I once thought that the *disciple* of the following verse

<sup>1</sup> [So also: "Or rudely 'sdain a gentle heart's request."—*Spenser, F. Q. iii. l. 55.*—W. W. S.]

fell under the present rule, and was to be pronounced 'sciple,

And bitter penance with an iron whip  
Was wont him once to *disciple* every day.

*F. Q. 1. 10. 27.*

but elsewhere, when used as a word of three syllables, Spenser accents it *dis'ciple*, and we often find it written *disple* in the early part of the sixteenth century. Such was doubtless its pronunciation in the line before us.<sup>1</sup>

It may be observed here, though it does not strictly fall under the present head of our subject, that Shakespeare has used 'cide for *decide*,

To 'cide | this ti|tle : is | impan|eled  
A quest of thoughts.

*Sonnet 46.*

#### VOWEL COMBINATIONS.

We are now to consider such syllables, as are rendered doubtful by the meeting of two vowel sounds. We will begin with those which contain the sounds represented by *ay*' and *ow*'.

There were many dissyllables in the Anglo-Saxon, which contained in the first syllable the diphthong *æ*, followed by a *g*. All these have now lost the *g*, and become monosyllables, as *fæger* fair, *stæger* stair, *snægel* snail.

We learn, from the mode of spelling that prevailed some centuries back, and from the pronunciation which still lingers in our provinces, that the first change was that of the *g* into a *y*, *fayer*, *stayer*, &c. &c. The next step seems to have been to drop the *y*, and pronounce the words *fa-ir*, *sta-ir*, &c., and to this mode of pronunciation our present orthography was accommodated. They finally became monosyllables.

There were other words which had also *g* for the middle letter, and *a* or *u* in the first syllable; these generally turned the *g* into *w*, as *agen* own, *fugel* fowl; a use of the *w*

<sup>1</sup> [It is actually printed *disple* in this very passage in the Globe edition.—W. W. S.]

which was already known to the Anglo-Saxon, for example, in *fewer* four. By degrees the *w* was dropt, and after some further time these words also became monosyllabic.

The dissyllables containing *y* and *w* seem to have been once so numerous in our language, that many words, both English and foreign, were adapted to their pronunciation, and thus gained a syllable; *scúr*, A.S., became shower, and *fleur*, Fr., became flower. Change of pronunciation has again reduced them to their original dimensions.

And soft | unto | himself | : he say | ed <sup>1</sup> fie ! |  
Upon a Lord, that woll have no mercie.

*Chau. The Knightes Tale ; C. T. 1775.*

Beseech | ing him | : with pray | er and | with praise |.

*Spenser. F. Q. 1. 5. 41.*

Nor crab | bed oares | : nor pray | ers make | him rise |.

*Hall. Satires, 3. 6. 12.*

She's com | ing up | the sta | irs : now | the mus | ic—

*Fletcher. Valentinian, 2. 5.*

— The light whereof . . . .

Such blaz | ing bright | ness : through | the a | er threw |,  
That eye mote not the same endure to view.

*F. Q. 1. 8. 19.*

Save hazell for forks, save sawlow for rake,  
Save hul | ver and thorn | : thereof fla | il <sup>2</sup> to make |.

*Tusser. April's Husbandry, st. 10.*

So spake | th' archan | gel : Mi | chael | then paus'd |.

*P. L. 12. 466.*

Or on | each Mi | chael | : and La | dy day |  
Took he deep forfeits for an hour's delay.

*Hall. Sat. 5. 1. 49.*

Where | is thy pow | er then | : to beat | him back |.

*R. III. 4. 4. 480.*

Or ush | er'd in <sup>1</sup> : a show | er still |  
When the gust hath blown his fill.

*Il Penseroso, 127.*

<sup>1</sup> [So in Tyrwhitt, but wrongly; the right form is *seyde*, where the final *e* is duly sounded.—W. W. S.]

<sup>2</sup> [But read "flail for to make," as in the best editions.—W. W. S.]

So man | y ho | urs : must | I tend | my flock |,  
 So man | y ho | urs : must | I take | my rest |,  
 So man | y ho | urs : must | I con | template |.

3 *H. VI.* 2. 5. 31.

Let ev | ery hil | lock : be fo | uer feet wide |,  
 The better to come to on every side.

*Tusser. Marches Husbandry, st. 7.*

Yet where, how, and when ye intend to begin,  
 Let ev | er the fin | est be first | sown in |.

*Tusser. Octobers Husbandry, st. 5.*

I wol myselfen gladly with you ride,  
 Right | at min ow | en cost | : and be | your guid | e.

*Chau. Prol.* 805.

When the long *o*, or its equivalents, was followed by a short vowel, Milton often melted them into a diphthong, in cases which have not been sanctioned by subsequent usage ;

—— Or if Sion's hill

Delight | thee more | : and Sil | oa's brook, | that flow'd |  
 Fast by the oracles of God.

*P. L.* 1. 10.

—— And with more pleasing light

Shad | ovy sets off | the face | : of things |, in vain |  
 If none regard.

*P. L.* 5. 42.

Why dost thou then suggest to me distrust,  
*Knowing* who | I am | : as I | know who | thou art |?

*P. R.* 1. 355.

The fel | lows of | his crime | : the fol | lowers rath | er.

*P. L.* 1. 606.

#### THE SYLLABLES *i'*, *e'*, *u'*.

When the long *i* is followed by a short vowel, the latter is elided among the vulgar even to this day. There is no mispronunciation which now strikes the ear more offensively ; yet little more than a century ago, and it must have been general.

And all the prophets in their age the times  
 Of great | *Messiah* | shall sing | : Thus laws | and rites |  
 Established, &c.

*P. L.* 12. 243.

March | to your sev | eral homes | : by Nio | be's stone |.

*Ben Jonson. Cynthia's Revels, 5. 3.*



———— 'Tis worse than murder  
To do | upon | respect | : such *vio* | *lent* out | rage.  
*Lear*, 2. 4. 23.

———— God, in judgment just,  
Subjects | him from | without | : to *vio* | *lent* lords. |  
*P. L.* 12. 92.

The mouse | may some | time help | : the *lion* | at neede | ,  
The lyttle bee once spilt the eagles breed.  
*Dolman. M. for M. Hastings*, 21.

———— Your several colours, Sir,  
Of | the pale cit | ron : the | green *lion* | the crow | .  
*B. Jons. The Alchemist*, 2. 1.

Who tore | the *lion* | : as | the *lion* tears | the kid | .  
*Samson Agon.* 128.

———— Half on foot,  
Half *flying* ; | behoves | him now | : both oar | and sail | .  
*P. L.* 2. 941.

With flowers fresh their heads bedeckt,  
The fairies dance in fieldes,  
And wanton songs in mossye dennes,  
The *Drids* | and Sat | yrs yielde | .  
*Googe's Zodiake of Life. Taurus.*

His knights | grow *rio* | *tous* : and | himself | upbraids | us  
On every trifle. *Lear*, 1. 3. 6.

———— The noise  
Of *riot* | ascends | : above | their loft | iest tow'rs | .  
*P. L.* 1. 498.

Pluck the lin'd crutch from thy old limping sire,  
With | it beat out | his brains | : *pie* | *ty* and fear |  
Decline, &c. *T. of A.* 4. 1. 14.

Is *pie* | *ty* thus | : and pure | devo | tion paid | ? *P. L.* 11. 452.

———— Thy words, with grace divine  
Imbued, | bring to | their sweet | ness : no | *satie* | *ty*.  
*P. L.* 8. 215.

And | with *satie* | *ty* seeks | : to quench | his thirst | —  
*T. of the Shrew*, 1. 1. 24.

———— Who, having seen me in my worst estate,  
Shunn'd | my abhorr'd | *socie* | *ty* : but | now find | ing  
Who 'twas that so endur'd, with his strong arms  
He fasten'd on my neck. *Lear*, 5. 3. 209.

For so|litude | sometimes|: is best | socie|ty.

*P. L.* 9. 249.

—— as well might recommend

Sach sol|itude | before|: choic|est socie|ty.

*P. R.* 1. 301.

These verses of Milton have bewildered the critics. Mitford and Todd both give to *society* four syllables. The former reads the verse with six accents,

For sol|itude | sometimes|: is best | soci|ety|

the latter ends it with two unaccented syllables,

For sol|itude | sometimes|: is best | soci|ety.

Neither of these rhythms is to be found in the *Paradise Lost*. There is little doubt that Tyrwhitt scanned these lines in the same way as Todd. He talks of Milton using the *sdrucchiolo* ending in his heroic poems. These are the only verses which in any way countenance such a notion.

The elision of the vowel after the long *e* is rare.

For when, alas ! I saw the tyrant king  
Content not only from his nephews twayne  
To rive | world's blisse|: but al|so all | world's being|,  
Sans earthly gylt ycausing both be slayne,  
My heart agrisde that such a wretch should raigne.

*Sackville. M. for M. Buckingham, 49.*

As being | the con|trary|: to his | high will|  
Whom we resist—

*P. L.* 1. 161.

Seeing too | much sad|ness : hath | congeal'd | your blood|.

*T. of the Shrew. Induction, 2. 134.*

The elision after the long *u* is still more rare,

Full many a yeare the world lookt for my fall,  
And when I fell, I made as great a cracke  
As doth an oak, or mighty tottring wall,  
That whirl|ing wind | doth bring|: to ruin | and wracke.

*Churchyards. M. for M. Wolsey, 69.*

When the short *i* or short *e* was followed by *a*, as it sounds in *pate*, Milton and his contemporaries sometimes melted the vowels into a diphthong *ya*. In modern practice we carefully distinguish between them.

———— With tears  
 Watering the ground, and with our sighs the air  
 Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in sign  
 Of sor|row unfeign'd|: and hu|milia|tion meek|—  
*P. L. 10. 1089.*

To conquer Sin and Death, the two grand foes,  
 By hu|milia|tion: and | strong suf|ferance|—  
*P. R. 1. 159.*

———— Let me  
 Interpret for him, me his advocate  
 And pro|pitia|tion: all | his works | on me|  
 Good or not good, ingraft. *P. L. 11. 32.*

Instructed that to God is no access  
 Without | media|tor: whose | high of|fice now|  
 Moses in figure bears. *P. L. 12. 239.*

Then | doth the thea|tre: ech|o all | aloud,|  
 With gladsome noise of that applauding crowd.  
*Hall's Sat. 1. 3. 37.*

In the country, even to this day, the accent is thrown upon the middle syllable, *thea|tre*, but the word is always pronounced as having three syllables.

When the short *i* or short *e* was followed by a short vowel, they often formed two syllables in cases where we now always melt them into a diphthong, or elide the first vowel.

———— A broche of gold ful shene,  
 On which was first ywritten a crowned A,  
 And af|ter, a|mor vin|cit: om|nia|. *Chau. Prol. 160.*

But | the captiv'd|: Acra|sia | he sent|,  
 Because of travel long, a nigher way. *F. Q. 3. 1. 2.*

Five summers have I spent in furthest Greece,  
 Roam|ing clean through | the bounds|: of A|sia|. *Com. of Errors, 1. 1. 133.*

The vines | and the o|siers: cut | and go set|,  
 If grape be unpleasant, a better go get.  
*Tusser. Februaries Husbandry, st. 15.*

Himself | goes patch'd|: like some | bare cot|tyer|,  
 Lest he might aught the future stock appeire.  
*Hall. Sat. 4. 2.*

He vaunts his voice upon an hired stage,  
With high | -set steps | : and prince | ly car | riage |.

*Hall. Sat. 1. 3. 21.*

When the words end in *ence*, *ent*, or *an*, the additional syllable now sounds very uncouthly.

Well coude he fortunen the ascendent  
Of | his imag | es : for | his pa | tient |.

*Chau. Prol. 419.*

Th' unskill | ful leech | : mnr | dered his pa | tient |,  
By poison of some foul ingredient.

*Hall. Sat. 2. 4. 23.*

Con | trary to | : the Ro | man an | cients |,  
Whose words were short, and darksome was their sense.

*Hall. Sat. 3 book. Prol.*

Whose scep | ter guides | : the flow | ing o | cean |.

*B. Jon. Cynthia's Rev. 5. 2.*

No airy fowl can take so high a flight—  
Nor fish can dive so deep in yielding sea—  
Nor fearful beast can dig his cave so low—  
As | that the air | : the earth | or o | cean, |  
Should shield them from the gorge of greedy man.

*Hall. Sat. 3. 1.*

But by far the most common instance of this resolution of syllables occurs in our substantival ending *ion*. From the 14th to the 17th century this termination expanded into two syllables whenever the verse required it.

Full swe | tely | : herd | e he confes | sion |,  
And pleas | ant was | : his ab | solu | tion |.

*Chau. Prol. 221.*

Ne can the man that moulds in idle cell  
Un | to her hap | py : man | sion | attain |.

*F. Q. 2. 3. 41.*

——— 'Tis the list  
Of those that claim their offices this day  
By cus | tom of | : the cor | ona | tion |.

*H. VIII. 4. 1. 14.*

My muse would follow those that have foregone,  
But can | not with | : an Eng | lish pin | ion |.

*Hall. Sat. 3. Prol.*

Before we close this section I would add a word or two

respecting the diphthong *ea*. This diphthong, though its representative still keeps its place in our orthography, has long since been obsolete. In our provinces, however, where it still lingers, we often hear it resolved into a dissyllable, *e-at, gre-at, me-at, &c.* I have watched with some care, to see if it ever held the place of a dissyllable in our poetry, as in such case our Anglo-Saxon and early English rhythms might be seriously affected. My search has not been successful, and the result has been a strong conviction, that the *ea*, which so frequently occurs in our Anglo-Saxon poems, was strictly diphthongal.

I think, however, that in one or two instances this resolution of the diphthong has actually taken place, as in the following stave,

Now shall the wanton devils dance in rings,  
In ev|ery mead| : and ev|ery he|ath bore|,  
The elvish fairies and the gobelins,  
The hoofed satyrs silent heretofore.

*Hall. Elegy on Dr. Whitaker, st. 5.*

This English diphthong will, of course, not be confounded with the *ea* that occurs in certain French words, and which was not unfrequently resolved into two syllables.

That ther n' is erthe, water, fire, ne aire,  
Ne cre|atur|e : that of | hem ma|ked is|  
That may me hele or don comfort in this.

*Chau. The Knightes Tale; C. T. 1248.*

#### NASALS AND LIQUIDS.

The subjects of the present section are the nasals *m, n,* and the liquids *l* and *r*. Of these letters two, namely, *n* and *l*, occasionally form consonantal syllables; the remaining three cannot form a syllable without a vowel. The following are instances of the vowel having been dropt and the syllable lost.

But always wept, and wailed night and day  
As blas|ted blom| thro heat|: doth lan|guish and | decay|.

*F. Q. 4. 8. 2.*

Amongst them all grows not a fairer flower  
 Than is | the *blossom* | : of come | ly cour | teay |,  
 Which, though it on a lowly stalk do bower,  
 Yet brancheth forth in brave nobility. *F. Q. 6. Prol. 4.*

The short vowel was sometimes elided before the *m*, even when the consonant was found in another syllable.

Hewn | out of *ad* | *amant* rock | : with eng | ines keen |.  
*F. Q. 1. 7. 33.*

As if | in *ad* | *amant* rock | it had | been pight |.  
*F. Q. 1. 11. 25.*

*Legit* | *imate* Ed | gar : I | must have | your land |.  
*Lear, 1. 2. 15.*

Far be the thought of this from Henry's heart,  
 To make | a sham | bles : of | the *par* | *liament* house |.  
*3 H. VI. 1. 1. 70.*

They | were a feare | : un | to the en | myes<sup>1</sup> eye. |  
*Churchyard. Siege of Leith, st. 4.*

———— I profess  
 Myself | an *en* | *emy* : to | all oth | er joys |. *Lear, 1. 1. 74.*

So spake | the *en* | *emy* : of | mankind, | enclos'd |  
 In serpent. *P. L. 9. 494.*

And next to him malicious Envy rode  
 Upon a rav'nous wolf, and still did chaw  
 Between | his cank | red teeth | : a *ven* | *omous* toad |.  
*F. Q. 1. 4. 30.*

These things did sting  
 His mind | so *ven* | *omously* | : that burn | ing shame |  
 Detains him. *Lear, 4. 4. 47.*

On the other hand we now always drop the penultimate *e* of French words in *ment*, which once formed an independent syllable.

———— Thus by on assent  
 We ben | accord | ed : to | his jug | *ement* |.  
*Chau. Prol. 819.*

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<sup>1</sup> This author always makes *enemy* a dissyllable, and spells it as in the text.

And who | that wol | : my *jug|ement* | withsay |,  
Shall pay for all we spenden by the way.

*Chau. Prol.* 807.

For of his hands he had no government,  
Ne car'd | for blood | : in his | *aveng|ement* |.

*F. Q.* 1. 4. 34.

Then many a Lollard would in forfeitment,  
Bear pa|per fag|gots : o'er | the *pav|ement* |.

*Hall. Sat.* 2. 1. 17.

He came | at his | : *command|ement* | on hi|e,  
Tho sente Theseus for Emilie.

*Chau. The Knightes Tale; C. T.* 2981.

The wretched woman whom unhappy hour  
Hath now | made thrall | : to your | *command|ement* |.

*F. Q.* 1. 2. 22.<sup>1</sup>

The word *regiment* is now also generally made a dissyllable, though we occasionally hear it pronounced with three syllables, as in the verses,

The *re|giment* | : was wil|ling and | advanc'd | too.

*Fletcher. Bonduca,* 2. 4.

His *reg|iment* | : lies half | a mile | at least |  
South from the mighty power of the King.

*R. III.* 5. 3. 37.

*M*, we have said, cannot form a syllable without a vowel. This rule holds both as regards our spelling and our pronunciation; but one or two centuries ago the termination *sm* was often pronounced *som*, as it is among the vulgar to this day.

Great Solomon sings in the English quire,  
And is become a new-found sonnetist,  
Singing his love, the holy spouse of Christ,  
Like as she were some light-skirts of the rest,  
In migh|tiest *ink|hornis|ms* : he | can thith|er wrest |.

*Hall. Sat.* 1. 8. 8.

All this | by *syl|logis|m*, true |  
In mood and figure, he would do.

*Butler. Hudibras,* 1. 1. 79.

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<sup>1</sup> [And in *F. Q.* 1. 3. 9.—W. W. S.]

*Enthu|sias|m's past | redem|ption*  
*Gaen in a galloping consumption.*

*Burns' Letter to John Goudie, st. 4.*

These words should have been written as pronounced, *inkhornisom, syllogisom, &c.*

*N* is one of the two letters, which form consonantal syllables. It is difficult to say when it first obtained this privilege, but it could hardly have been so early as the reign of Elizabeth. In that reign, Gabriel Harvey objected to Spenser's use of *heaven, seven, &c.*, as dissyllables, the same not being "authorized by the ordinarie use and custom." He would have them written and spoken "as monosyllaba, thus, heavn, seavn, &c." I think therefore that *heaven, seven, &c.*, were commonly pronounced then, as now, with only one vowel; and that when Spenser and his contemporaries made them dissyllables, they imitated an obsolete, or rather a provincial dialect, and pronounced them with two vowels. This latter mode of pronunciation has left traces behind it; even yet we may occasionally hear *heav-en, sev-en, &c.*, among the vulgar.

There are four terminations into which *n* enters, *an, en, in, on*; of these *en* is now merely consonantal, as in *even*; *an* and *on* sound like *un*, as in *Roman, reason*; and *in* retains its proper sound as in *griffin*. Our poets use *en* as a syllable whenever it suits their convenience; though, generally speaking, the only difference in the pronunciation is a lengthening of the *n*. The terminations *an, on, and in*, are now commonly used as syllables; although Milton and some of his contemporaries elide the vowel, and tack *n* to the preceding syllable, when their rhythm requires it.

*Heaven's | is the quar|rel : for | heaven's sub|stitute |*  
*Hath caus'd his death. R. II. 1. 2. 37.*

*Ed|ward's seven sons| : whereof | thyself | art one, |*  
*Were | as seven phi|als : of | his sa|cred blood, |*  
*Or seven | fair branch|es : spring|ing from | one root |.*  
*R. II. 1. 2. 11.*

*And Palamon, this woful prisoner, . . .*  
*Was risen, | and rom|ed : in | a chambre | on high |.*  
*Chau. The Knights Tale; C. T. 1065.*



——— Seems another morn  
*Risen* | on mid noon | : some great | behest | from heaven |  
 To us perhaps he brings. *P. L. 5. 310.*

In an | y case | : that migh | te *fallen* | , or hap | pe.  
*Chau. Prol. 587.*

*Fallen* cher | ub : to | be weak | is mis | era | ble.  
*P. L. 1. 157.*

One of our leading reviews scanned the last verse thus,

Fal | len cher | ub : to be weak | is mis | era | ble.

and Mitford almost laughs at the notion of *heav'n* and *giv'n* being pronounced as monosyllables!

The following are examples of the termination *on*,

——— Fardest<sup>1</sup> from him is best  
 Whom *reason* | hath e | quall'd : force | hath made | supreme |  
 Above his equals. *P. L. 1. 247.*

*Charon* | was afraid | : lest thirs | ty Gul | lion |  
 Would have drunk dry the river Acheron.  
*Hall. Sat. 3. 6. 5.*

There is sometimes the same elision of the vowel, and the same loss of a syllable, in the middle of a word ;

And thereto had he ridden, no man ferre,  
 As wel | in *Cristen* | dom : as | in Heth | enes | se,  
 And ever honoured for his worthinesse. *Chau. Prol. 48.*

Though | of their names | : in *heaven* | ly rec | ords now |  
 Be no memorial. *P. L. 1. 361.*

My curse upon your whunstane hearts,  
 Ye *Edin* | burgh gen | try !  
 The tithe o' what ye waste at cartes,  
 Wad stow'd his pantry.  
*Burns. To William Simpson, st. 4.*

It may be here observed, that the elision of the vowel is generally the first step towards corruption. *Ed'nburgh* was merely introductory to *E'enboro'*.

The short vowels were also very frequently elided before *n*, when that letter began the following syllable.

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<sup>1</sup> Our Editors will not believe that even Milton could write English ; and "correct" his *fardest*, *perfet*, and other barbarisms of the like kind, without the least hint to the reader.

Un|to ourselves : | it hap|neth oft | among|.

*Drayton. M. for M. Cromwell, 120.*

— My counsel swaied all,

For still | the king| : would | for the card'nall call|.

*Drayton. M. for M. Wolsey, 35.*

They are but blinde that wake where fortune sleeps,  
They worke in vayne that strive with streame and tide,  
In doub|le garde | they dwell| : that dest|nye keeps|.

*Drayton. M. for M. Wolsey, 17.*

Dest|iny by death | : spoiled fee|ble na|ture's frame|.

*Hall. Elegy on Dr. Whitaker, st. 9.*

Pride pricketh men to flatter for the prey,  
T'opprese | and poll | : for maint'nance of | the same|.

*Chalm. M. for M. Northfolke, 8.*

— And each

In oth|er's count|enance read | : his own | dismay.

*P. L. 2. 421.*

I was despicde, and banisht from my bliss,  
Discount|naunte, fayne | : to hide | myself | for shame|.

*Higgins. M. for M. King Emerianus, 3.*

— Wisdom in discourse with her

Los|es discount|enanc'd : and | like fol|ly shows|.

*P. L. 8. 552.*

Ignom'ny was further corrupted into ignomy ;

Thy ig|nomy | : sleep with | thee in | thy grave|.

*1 H. IV. 5. 4. 100.*

Hence, broth|er lack|ey : ig|nomy | and shame|

Pursue thy life. *Tro. and Cress. 5. 10. 33.*

When the termination *en* followed *r*, it often formed a syllable, in cases where the vowel is now elided, as *boren*, *toren*, &c.

Eke Zea|land's pit|eous plaints | : and Hol|land's tor|en hair.

*Spenser. Mourning Muse of Thestylis, 26.*

When *ng* followed the short *i* at the end of a word or syllable, the vowel appears sometimes to have been elided among our dramatists ;

*Having* nei|ther sub|ject : wealth, | nor di|adem|.

*2 H. VI. 4. 1. 82.*

— Sometimes he angers me

With *telling* | me of | the mold- | warp : and | the ant.

1 *H. IV.* 3. 1. 148.

*Buck* | *ingham*, doth York | : intend | no harm | to us | ?

2 *H. VI.* 5. 1. 56.

Humph | rey of *Buck* | *ingham* : I | accept | thy greet | ing.

2 *H. VI.* 5. 1. 15.

Why, *Buck* | *ingham*, is | the trai | tor : Cade | surpris'd | ?

2 *H. VI.* 4. 9. 18.

— My Lord Cobham,

With whom | the Ken | tish men | : will *willing* | *ly* rise | .

3 *H. VI.* 1. 2. 40.

This oath | I *willing* | *ly* take | : and will | perform | .

3 *H. VI.* 1. 1. 201.

Our dramatists use a very irregular metre, and are therefore not the safest guides in a matter of this kind ; but when we find a word recurring again and again, in situations where our prevailing rhythms require the subtraction of a syllable, I think we may fairly conclude such to have been the pronunciation of the poet.

*L*, I believe, in pronunciation no longer follows any consonant at the end of a word or syllable excepting *d*, *t*, *r*. In the language of the present day, we generally hear a short *u* before it. The difference between it and the letter *n* in this respect must, I think, be obvious if the pronunciation of *evil* be compared with that of *heaven*. The first sounds clearly with two vowels *e-vul*, but if we were to pronounce the latter *hev-un* it would at once strike us as uncouth and vulgar.

In the Anglo-Saxon, *l* was very generally used without a vowel, as *adl* sickness, *swegl* the sky, *susl* sulphur. In the early English we changed this mode of spelling, and adopted the French ending *le* in the place of *l*, writing *settle*, for instance, instead of the A. S. *setl*. We have preserved this orthography, except in cases where *l* follows *r*, although we have since changed the pronunciation.

We will first give examples in which the vowel has been elided, and a syllable lost in consequence ;

What *evil* | is left | undone | : when man | may have | his will | ?  
 Man ever was a hypocrite, and so continues still.

*Tusser's Omnipotence of God, st. 2.*

Each home-bred science percheth in the chair,  
 While sa | cred arts | : *grovel* | on the ground | sel bare |.

*Hall. Sat. 2. 3. 23.*

Foul *devil*, | for God's | sake hence : | and trouble | us not |.

*R. III. 1. 2. 50.*

But when to sin our biass'd nature leans,  
 The care | ful *devil* | : is still | at hand | with means |.

*Dryden. Abs. & Achit. 79.*

This *noble* | ensam | ple : to | his shepe | he yaf |.

*Chau. Prol. 498.*

So *noble* | a mas | ter fallen | : all gone |, and not |

One friend to take his fortune by the arm,

And go along with him ?

*T. of A. 4. 1. 46.*

When this advice is free I give, and honest,

*Pro* | bal to think | ing : and | indeed | the course |

To win the Moor again.

*Othello, 2. 3. 342.*

*Probal* is found in all the early editions, and is clearly a corruption of *probable*. It shows, if any proof were wanting, that the French ending *able*, was commonly used by our early English writers as one syllable. Such was it considered by Chaucer, who makes the word *able*, corresponding to the French *habile*, a dissyllable. Milton made this ending one or two syllables, as best suited his verse, and such was the common practice of his contemporaries. At present it is always pronounced *abul*, and of course fills the place of two syllables. When it was so used by our early English poets, they seem, at least in some cases, to have accommodated their spelling to it; to have written, for example, *fabill* for fable, and *delectabill* for delectable. This orthography, and in all probability the pronunciation which corresponded with it, prevailed chiefly in the North.

And thus with fained flattering and japes

He made | the per | sone : and | the *peple* | his apes |.

*Chau. Prol. 707.*

Anon | ther is | a noise | : of *peple* | begonne |.

*Chau. C. T. 2662.*

There was also a nonne, a prioresse,  
That | of her smil|ing : was | ful *simple* | and coy|. *Chau. Prol.* 118.

— The wisest heart  
Of Solomon he led by fraud to build  
His tem|ple right | against | : the *temple* | of God|. *P. L.* 1. 401.

And his next son, for wealth and wisdom fam'd,  
The clouded ark of God, till then in tents  
Wand|ering, shall in | a glo|rious : *temple* | enshrine|. *P. L.* 12. 332.

— This house  
Is *little*, | the old | man : and | his peo|ple can|not  
Be well bestowed.<sup>1</sup> *Leear*, 2. 4. 291.

— The place, unknown and wild,  
Breeds dreadful doubts. Oft fire is without smoke,  
*Peril* | without show | : there|fore your har|dy stroke|,  
Sir knight, with-hold. *F. Q.* 1. 1. 12.<sup>2</sup>

Of son|dry dou|tes : thus they *jangle* | and tret|e.  
*Chau. The Squires Tale; C. T.* 10534.

Wer't | not all one | : an emp|ty *eagle* | were set|  
To guard the chicken from a hungry kite,  
As place Duke Humphrey for the King's Protector?  
*2 H. VI.* 3. 1. 248.

And | for this *mir|acle* : in | conclu|sion|,  
And by Custance's mediation,  
The king, and many another in that place,  
Converted was, thanked be Cristes grace.  
*Chau. Man of Lawes Tale; C. T.* 5103.

— Contempt itself, that doth incite  
Each *single*-|sol'd squire | : to set | you at | so light|. *Hall's Sat.* 2. 2. 17.

How, | Sir ! this *gent|'man* : you | must bear | withal|. *B. Jonson. Alchemist*, 2. 1.

Where nought but shadowy forms were seen to move,  
As *Idle|ness* fanc|ied in | her dream|ing mood|. <sup>3</sup>  
*Thomson, Castle of Indolence*, 1. 5.

<sup>1</sup> [The lines are differently divided in the Globe edition.—W. W. S.]

<sup>2</sup> [The Globe edition reads: "And perill without showe: therfore your stroke." That *without* had the accent on *with*, appears from the preceding line, and is particularly noted further on, at the end of Chap. IV.—W. W. S.]

<sup>3</sup> [But Thomson *purposely* wrote *idless*, and not *idleness*.—W. W. S.]

I'd rath|er hear | : a braz|en candle|stick turn'd.

1 *H. IV.* 3. 1. 131.

In the quartos we have *can-stick*, which appears to have been a common corruption in the time of Shakespeare. In like manner, from *ev'l* and *dev'l* come *ill* and *deil*; and there can be no doubt that *gent'man*, by a further corruption, has become our slang term *gemman*. Thomson seems to have made *idleness* a dissyllable, in imitation of Spenser, whose stanza he had adopted.

The short vowels, when they formed independent syllables before *l*, were frequently elided, and even at the present day the same license is occasionally taken.

——— What can you say to draw

A third | more *op|ulent* : than | your sis|ters ? Speak|.

*Lear*, 1. 1. 87.

Beef | that erst *Herc|ules*<sup>1</sup> held | : for fin|est fare|.

*Hall. Sat.* 3. 3.

*Partic|ular* pains | : *partic|ular* thanks | do ask|.

*B. Jonson. Cynthia's Revels*, 5. 3.

——— Thus was the building left

*Ridic|ulous*, and | the work | : Confu|sion nam'd|.

*P. L.* 12. 61.

——— And approve

The fit | rebuke | : of so | *ridic|ulous* heads|.

*B. Jonson. Cynthia's Revels*, 5. 1.

That over there may flie no fowl but dyes

Choakt | with the *pest|lent* sav|ours : that | arise|.

*Sackville. M. for M. Induction*, 31.

Keep safe|ly and *war|ily* : thy ut|termost fence|.<sup>2</sup>

*Tusser. Sept. Husbandry*, st. 36.

In worst | extremes | : and on | the *per|ilous*<sup>3</sup> edge|

Of battle.

*P. L.* 1. 276.

——— The sun who, scarce uprisen, . . .

Shot *par|allel* to | the earth | : his dew|y ray|.

*P. L.* 5. 139.

<sup>1</sup> Hence Shakespeare's *Ercles*.

<sup>2</sup> [But *Tusser* has *warely*.—W. W. S.]

<sup>3</sup> Hence *parlous*, so common among our Elizabethan writers.

No ser|vant at ta|ble : use *sauc'* | *ly* to talk|. *Tusser*, § 86.

The shot was such ther could no sound of drumme  
Be eas|'ly heard | the tyme| : I you | assure|. *Churchyard. Siege of Leith, st. 19.*

———— For I in publique weal  
Lorde *Chanc* | *lour* was | : and had | the great | broad seal|. *Drayton. M. for M. Wolsey, 37.*

His amner too he made mee all in haste,  
And threefolde giftes he threwe upon me still,  
His *couns* | *lour* straight| : like| wise was Wol|sey plaste|. *Drayton. M. for M. Wolsey, 15.*

Some of our poets of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries pronounced the vowel, in cases where it is now rejected.

So neither this travell may seem to be lost,  
Nor thou | to repent | of this *tri* | *fling* cost|. *Tusser, p. 2 (E. D. S. edition).*

*Tum* | *bling* all | : precip|itate | down dash'd|. *Dyer's Ruins of Rome, l. 41.*

Which | when in vain | : he tride | with *strug* | *geling* |,  
Inflam'd with wrath, his raging blade he heft. *F. Q. 1. 11. 39.*

Let sec|ond broth|ers : and | poor *nes* | *tlings* |  
Whom more injurious nature later brings  
Into this naked world, let them assaine  
To get hard pennyworths. *Hall. Sat. 2. 2. 43.*

And as | it queinte | : it mad|e a *whis* | *teling* |,  
As don these brondes wet in her brenning.  
*Chau. The Knightes Tale ; C. T. 2339.*

———— My eyes these lines with tears do steep,  
To think | how she | : through guile|ful *hand* | *eling* |, . . .  
Is from her knight divorced in despair. *F. Q. 1. 3. 2.*

Both star|ing fierce | : and hold|ing i| *dely* |  
The broken reliques of their former cruelty. *F. Q. 1. 2. 16.*

For half | so bold|ely | : can ther | no man |  
Swęren and lien as a woman can.  
*Chau. The Wif of Bathes Prol. ; C. T. 5809.*

But *trew* | *ely* | : to tel|len at|te last|,  
He was in church a noble ecclesiast.  
*Chau. Prol. 709.*

For *trew* | *ely* | : comfort | ne mirth | e is non |  
To riden by the way, dumbe as a ston.

*Chau. Prol. 775.*

Some words in the North of England and in Scotland, retain the short vowel, when it follows an *r*, even to this day.

That done | the *ear* | *l* let | ters wrote |  
Unto each castle, fort, and hold, &c.

*Flodden Field, 475.*

Ye'll try | the *war* | *ld* : soon | my lad |.

*Burns. Epistle to a young friend, st. 2.*

'Twas e'en, the dew | y fields were green,  
On ev | ery blade | : the *pear* | *ls* hang |.

*Burns. Lass o' Ballochmyle.*

In the modern pronunciation of our language, *r* follows no consonant at the end of a word or syllable. In some of our old English dialects such a combination was common, and was expressed by the French ending *re*. In all these cases we now interpose a short *u* before the *r*, and though we retain the spelling in a few instances, as in *acre*, *sepulcre*, *mitre*, &c., yet these words are always pronounced with the short vowel, *akur*, *sepulkur*, *mitur*, &c.

We will, as before, begin with those cases in which the final syllable has been lost.

And Palamon . . . .

Was risen | and rom | ed : in | a *chambre* | on high |,  
In which he all the noble citee sigh.

*Chau. The Knightes Tale; C. T. 1065.*

As Christ | I count | my head | : and I | a *member* | of his |,  
So God I trust for Christes sake shall settle me in bliss.

*Tusser's<sup>1</sup> Belief, st. 24.*

— Every tedious stride I make,

Will | but *remember* | me : what | a deal | of world |  
I wander.

*R. II. 1. S. 268.*

— N' is creature living

That *ever* | heard such | : anoth | er wai | menting |.

*Chau. Knightes Tale; C. T. 904.*

<sup>1</sup> The extreme precision of Tusser's rhythm renders his authority, in a case of this kind, of great value.



I must | not *suffer* | this : yet | 'tis but | the lees |  
And settlings of a melancholy blood. *Comus*. 809.

*Deliver* | us out | of all : this be | sy drede |.  
*Chau. Clerkes Tale* ; *C. T.* 8010.

Th' *Allgiver* | would be | unthank'd | : would be | unprais'd |.  
*Comus*, 723.

And where | the *river* | of bliss | : through midst | of heav | en  
Rolls o'er Elysian flowers. *P. L.* 3. 358.

And he hadde be sometime in chevachie  
In *Flandres*, | in Ar | tois : and | in Pic | ardi | e.  
*Chau. Prol.* 85.

By *water* | he sent | hem home | : to ev | ery land. |  
*Chau. Prol.* 402.

Her glor | ious *glitter* | and light | : doth all | men's eyes | amaze |.  
*F. Q.* 1. 4. 16.

— In proud rebellious arms  
Drew *after* | him the | third part | : of heav | en's sons |.  
*P. L.* 2. 691.

And after into heaven ascend he did in sight,  
And sit | teth on | the right | hand there | : of God | the *father* |  
of might. *Tusser's Belief*, st. 16.

If | by your art, | : my dea | rest *father*, | you have |  
Put the wild waters in this roar, allay them.  
*Tempest*, 1. 2. 1.

Three vollies let his memory crave  
O' *pouth'r* | an' lead, |  
Till Echo answer frae her cave,  
Tam Samson's dead.  
*Burns. Tam Samson's Elegy.*

*Whether* sayest | thou this | in er | nest : or | in play ? |  
*Chau. The Knightes Tale* ; *C. T.* 1127.

See *wh'e'r* | their bas | est met | al : be | not moved |.  
*Julius Caesar*, 1. 1. 66.

*Either* thou | or I | or both | : must go | with him |.  
*R. and J.* 3. 1. 134.

And *neither* | by trea | son : nor | hostil | ity |  
To seek to put me down. *3 H. VI.* 1. 1. 199.

We have one of the best proofs of the elision, in the further corruptions such words have undergone, *ov'r* be-

came *o'er*, *ev'r ere*, *oth'r or*, *wheth'r whe'r*; and in those dialects which are so intimately connected with our own, as almost to make part of the same language, we find these letters similarly affected. Thus in the Frisic *faer* is father, *moar* mother, *broer* brother, *foer* fodder. With a slight change in the orthography, we find the same words in the Dutch. This seems to point clearly to a similar cause of corruption in all these dialects. The elision of the vowel I believe to have been the first step.

As this final syllable is so important an element in the regulation of our rhythms, one or two more instances of its loss may, I think, be useful ;

— In his rising seem'd  
A *pillar* | of state | : deep | in his front | engrav|en  
Deliberation sat. P. L. 2. 301.

— Who shall go  
Before | them in | a cloud | : and *pillar* | of fire|. P. L. 12. 201.

Stud|ied the *grammar* | of state | : and all | the rules|. B. Jonson. Cynthia's Revels, 3. 4.

— Check  
This hid|eous rash|ness : *answer* | my life, | my judg|ment.  
Lear, 1. 1. 151.

In the following examples the vowel is elided at the end of a syllable ;

Tie | up the *liber*|*tine* : in | a field | of feasts|. A. and Cl. 2. 1. 23.

What trowen ye that whiles I may preche,  
And winnen gold and silver for I teche,  
That | I wol liv|e in *pover*|*te*<sup>1</sup> : wil|fully|. Chau. The Pardoner's Tale; C. T. 12373.

Take *pover*|*ties* part | : and let | prowde for|tune go|. Sir T. More. Book of Fortune.

My duke|dom to | : a *beggar*|*ly* den|ier|,  
I do mistake my person all this while. R. III. 1. 2. 252.

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<sup>1</sup> [Read *povert*, as in the best MSS.—W. W. S.]

In the next examples, the elided vowel is found in a different syllable from that of the *r*;

Since ped|ding bar|barisms : gan | be in | request|.   
 *Hall. Sat. 2. 3. 25.*

And specially from every shires ende  
Of Eng|lelond | : to Can|terbury | they wend|e.   
 *Chau. Prol. 15.*

So born I was to house and land by right,  
But in a bagg to court I brought the same,  
From *Shrews|brye* tounne | : a seate | of an|cient fame|.   
 *Churchyard. Tragical Discourse, 69.*

*Des|perate* revenge | : and bat|tle dan|gerous|.   
 *P. L. 2. 107.*

And I | the while | : with *sprits* | welny | bereft|,  
Beheld the plight and pangs that did him strayne.   
 *Sackville. M. for M. Buckingham, 87.*

The cap|tain notes | : what sol|dier hath | most *spreet*|.   
 *Churchyard. Trag. Disc. 64.*

You that had taught them to subdue their foes,  
Could or|der teach | : and their | high *sp'rits* | compose|.   
 *Waller. Panegyric, st. 41.*

For this infernal pit shall never hold  
Celes|tial *spirits* | in bon|dage : nor | the abyss |  
Long under darkness cover.   
 *P. L. 1. 658.*

*Ten|dering* the prec|ious safe|ty : of | my prince|.   
 *R. II. 1. 1. 32.*

Of daunt|less cour|age : and | consid|erate pride|.   
 *P. L. 1. 603.*

On some apparent danger seen in him  
Aim'd | at your high|ness : no *invet|erate* mal|ice.   
 *R. II. 1. 1. 13.*

Turning our tortures into horrid arms  
Against | the *tort|urer* : when | to meet | the noise |  
Of his almighty engine he shall hear  
Infernal thunder.   
 *P. L. 2. 63.*

Of *corm|rant* kinde | : some cram|med ca|pons are|,  
The moer they eat the moer they may consuem.   
 *Churchyard. Tragical Disc.*

*Tim|orous* and sloth|ful : yet | he pleas'd | the ear|.   
 *P. L. 2. 117.*

*Hum|orists and hyp|ocrites | : it should | produce|,*  
 Whole Raymond families and tribes of Bruce.

*Dryden. Mac Flecknoe, 92.*

A re|creant | : and most | *degen|erate* trai|tor.

*R. II. 1. 1. 144.*

The second verse quoted from Milton, is thus scanned by Tyrwhitt;

Celes|tial spir|its in bon|dage nor | the abyss|,

and is produced to show that the third foot sometimes contained three syllables!

In several cases, however, the vowel was retained where we now reject it; and so common must have been this mode of pronunciation, that we find it followed in many words which never properly contained an *e*. We find other words which inserted the short vowel after the long *i* or the long *e*, and thereby increased their dimensions by a syllable.

• For as you liketh, it sufficeth me.

Then | have I got | the *mais|terie* | quod she|.

*Chau. The Wif of Bathes T.; C. T. 6817.*

Here | may ye see | wel : how | that *gen|ter|e* |

Is not annexed to possession.

*Chau. The Wif of Bathes T.; C. T. 6728.*

I here confess myself the king of Tyre,

Who frigh|ted from| : my coun|try | did wed|

At Pentapolis the fair Thaisa.

*Per. 5. 3. 2.*

Then to him stepping, from his arm did reach

Those keys, | and made | himself| : free *en|terance* |.

*F. Q. 1. 8. 34.*

The raven himself is hoarse

That croaks | the fa|tal *en|trance* | of Dun|can,

Under my battlements.

*Macbeth, 1. 5. 39.*

That he is dead, good Warwick, 'tis too true,

But how | he died | God knows| : not *Hen|ry* |.

*2 H. VI. 3. 2. 130.*

The *Em|peress*, | the mid|wife : and | yourself|.

*Titus And. 4. 2. 143.*

———— Crying with loud voice,  
 "Jesus maintain your royal Excellence,"  
 With "God | preserve | : the good | Duke *Hum|phrey|*."  
 2 *H. VI.* 1. 1. 160.

Excep|ting none | : but good | Duke *Hum|phrey|*.  
 2 *H. VI.* 1. 1. 193.

———— Courage yields  
 No foot | to foe | : the flash|ing *fi|re* flies |,  
 As from a forge. *F. Q.* 1. 2. 17.

The prattling things are just their pride,  
 That sweet|ens all | : their *fi|re* side |.  
*Burns. Twa Dogs.*

Sluttery to such neat excellence display'd  
 Should make | *desi|re* : vo|mit emp|tiness |.  
*Cymbeline,* 1. 6. 44.

A gen|tleman | of *Ty|re* : my | name Per|icles.  
*Per.* 2. 3. 81.

———— There's many a soul  
 Shall pay | full *de|arly* | : for this | encoun|ter.  
 1 *H. IV.* 5. 1. 83.

Arcite unto the temple walked is  
 Of *fi|erce* Mars | : to don | his sac|rifice |.  
*Chau. The Knights Tale; C. T.* 2370.

Their God himself, griev'd at my liberty,  
 Shot man|y at | me with : *fi|erce* intent |.  
*F. Q.* 1. 9. 1<sup>1</sup>

#### THE CLOSE LETTERS.

In the present section we shall discuss the remaining letters of our alphabet, and will begin with the close letters. Of these there are six, *b, p, d, t, g, k*.

Adjectives in *able* and *ible* are sometimes pronounced as if the first vowel were elided. It is extremely difficult to say when this corruption first began. In the following verses,

Some time to increase his *horrible* cruelty  
 The quicke with face to face engraved he.  
*Sackville. M. for M. Buckingham,* 43.

<sup>1</sup> [But the Globe edition reads : "Shot many a dart at me with fierce intent ;" and Todd's edition has the same. Otherwise, the line is deficient in sense as well as metre.—W. W. S.]

——— Let fall

Your *horrible* pleasure. Here I stand, your slave.

*Lear*, 3. 2. 18.

it is clear that *horrible* is a dissyllable, but whether the *i* should be elided and the word pronounced *horr'ble*, or *ible* should be pronounced as one syllable, may be doubted. As, however, we know that *ible* was often pronounced as one syllable, and have no distinct evidence that the present corrupt pronunciation was then prevalent, it would be safer, perhaps, to retain the vowel.

The loss of the vowel before *g* or *c* is very rare.

——— Nor the time nor place

Will serve | our long | : *inter|gator|ies*. See |

Posthumus, &c.

*Cymbeline*, 5. 5. 391.

Thou ev|er young | : fresh, lov'd, | and *del|icate* woo|er.

*T. of A.* 4. 3. 385.

And now and then an ample tear trill'd down

Her *del|icate* cheek | : it seem'd | she was | a queen |

Over her passion.

*Lear*, 4. 3. 13.

Perfum|ed gloves | : and *del|icate* chains | of am|ber.

*B. Jons. Every Man out of his H.* 2. 2.

The elision before *d* and *t* is far more common.

The participle and preterite in *ed*, was often pronounced in our old English without the vowel. In Anglo-Saxon the participle ended sometimes in *od* or *ed*, sometimes in *d* simply. I do not, however, find that the elisions in our old English correspond with the latter class of Anglo-Saxon verbs; on the contrary, in some couplets, as in the following, the same verb seems to be both a monosyllable and a dissyllable,

For | in this world | : he lov|ed<sup>1</sup> no | man so|,

And he | loved him | : as ten|derly | again|.

*Chau. The Knightes Tale*; *C. T.* 1198.

Good milch-cow and pasture good husbands provide,

The *res|'due* good hus|wives : know best | how to guide|.

*Tusser. April Husb., st.* 19.

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<sup>1</sup> [Read *lovede* = *lov'de*, with final *e* sounded. In the next line, the final *e* is elided, and the word becomes *lov'd*.—W. W. S.]

The King, at length, sent me beyond the seas,  
*Embas* | *tour* then | : with *mes* | *sage* good | and *great* |.

*Drayton. M. for M. Wolsey, 14.*

Know Cade | we come | : *ambass* | *adours* from | the king |.

2 *H. VI. 4. 8. 7.*

He | roes' and her | oines' shouts | : *confus'd* | *ly* rise |.

*Pope's Rape of the Lock, 5. 41.*

——— Edmund, I arrest thee

On *cap* | *ital* trea | son : and | in thine | attaint |

This gilded serpent.

*Lear, 5. 3. 82.*

——— I arrest thee, York,

Of *cap* | *ital* trea | son : gainst | the King | and Crown |.

2 *H. VI. 5. 1. 106.*

Needs | must the ser | pent now | : his *cap* | *ital* bruise |

Expect with mortal pain.

*P. L. 12. 383.*

——— They all have met again,

And are | upon | : the *Med* | *iterra* | *nean* flote |

Bound sadly home for Naples.

*Tempest, 1. 2. 233.*

The rest | was *mag* | *nanim* | *ity* : to | remit |.

*Samson Agon. 1470.*

Pro | per *deform* | *ity* seems | not : in | the fiend |

So horrid as in woman.

*Lear, 4. 2. 60.*

*Human* | *ity* must | perforce | : prey | on itself |.

*Lear, 4. 2. 49.*

He knew not Caton, for his wit was rude,

That bade | a man | shulde wed | de : his *si* | *militude* |.

*Chau. The Milleres Tale; C. T. 3227.*

Would | the *nobil* | *ity* : lay | aside | their ruth |,

And let me use my sword, I'd make a quarry. *Cor. 1. 1. 201.*

Whose parents dear, whilst equal destinies

Did run aboute, and their felicities

The favourable heavens did not envy,

Did spread | their rule | : through all | the *terr* | *itories* |,

Which Phison and Euphrates floweth by.

*F. Q. 1. 7. 43.*

Sor | row would be | a *rar* | *ity* : most | belov'd, |

If all could so become it.

*Lear, 4. 3. 25.*

There is, however, one word in *ty*, which now always drops its penultimate vowel, though such vowel was retained as late as the seventeenth century.

For she | had great | : doubt | of his *saf'ety* |.

*F. Q.* 1. 11. 33.

Nor fish can dive so deep in yielding sea,

Though The | tis self | : should swear | her *saf'ety* |.

*Hall. Sat.* 3. 1. 48.

#### THE DENTALS.

We now come to the dental letters, *f* and *th*.

She's gone | a *man* | *ifest* ser | pent : by | her sting |—

*Samson Agon.* 997.

Scarf | up the *pit* | *iful* eye | : of ten | der day |—

*Macbeth*, 3. 2. 47.

Hast thou, according to thy oath and band,

Brought hith | er Hen | ry *Her* | *eford* : thy | bold son'?

*R. II.* 1. 1. 2.

*Eth*, the ending of the third person singular, often lost its vowel. In the Anglo-Saxon the third person ended in *ath*, *eth*, or *th*, and the last ending was most prevalent. Many of our old English verbs, which formerly ended in *ath*, elided the vowel; though such pronunciation was more usual in those verbs, which took *th* for their Anglo-Saxon termination: *think'th*, *ly'th*, *gif'th*, *com'th*, &c., were probably the direct descendants of the elder forms, *thincth*, *lith*, *giftth*, *cymth*, &c.

———— Drowned in the depth

Of depe desire to drinke the guiltlesse bloud,

Like | to the wolf | : with greed | y looks | that *lepth* |

Into the snare.

*Sackville. M. for M. Buckingham*, 25.

———— High God, in lieu of innocence,

Imprinted hath that token of his wrath,

To shew | how sore | : blood-guilt | iness | he *haf'th* |.

*F. Q.* 2. 2. 4.

His sub | tle tongue | : like drop | ping hon | ey *mell'th* |

Into the heart, and searcheth every vein,

That ere he be aware, by secret stelth,

His power is reft.

*F. Q.* 1. 9. 31.

This contraction prevailed very generally among the poets of the West. It occurs no less than five times in the following simile from Dolman,



So mid the vale the greyhound seeing stert  
 His fearful foe, *pursu'th*, before she *flet'th*,  
 And where she *turn'th*, he *turn'th* her there to beare,  
 The one prey *prick'th*, the other safety's fear.

*M. for M. Hastings, 24.*

#### THE SIBILANTS.

In discussing the sibilants, the first question relates to the contraction of *es*, the ending of the plural and of the genitive singular. There is no doubt that this syllable was occasionally contracted before the time of Chaucer, and by that author frequently;<sup>1</sup>

For him | was lev | er han | : at his | *beddes* hed |,  
 A twenty bokes clothed in black or red  
 Than robes riche, &c.

*Chau. Prol. 295.*

At mor | tal bat | *tailes* : had | de he ben | fitten | e.

*Chau. Prol. 61.*

It is still used when the substantive ends in a sibilant, and even in other cases was occasionally met with as late as the early part of the seventeenth century;

— Arose the doughty knight  
 All heal | ed of | his hurts | : and woun | *des* wide |.

*F. Q. 1. 11. 52.*

— Were I good Sir Bevis,  
 I would | not stay | his com | ing : by | your leav | *es*.  
*B. and Flet. Knight of the Burning Pestle, 3. 1.*

Farewell | madame | : my Lord | *es* worth | y moth | er.

*Sir Thomas More.*

Until he did a dying widow wed,  
 Whiles | she lay dot | ing : on | her death | *es* bed |.

*Hall. Sat. 4. 1. 62.*

No contraction was more common than that of the superlative.

<sup>1</sup> [I think not, except in plurals of words of more than one syllable, such as *batails* or *batailles* (spelt either way). Certainly not in the genitive singular. We must scan it otherwise:—

For him | was lever : | han at | his bed | *des* hed.—W. W. S.]

It was the owl that shriek'd, the fatal bellman  
Which gives | the *stern'st* | good night | : he is | about | it.  
*Macbeth*, 2. 2. 3.

Or | when they meant | : to fare | the *fin'st* | of all |  
They lick'd oak-leaves besprent with honey-fall.  
*Hall*. *Sat.* 3. 1. 16.

Thus | the *great'st* man | : of Eng | land made | his end |.  
*Drayton*. *M. for M.* *Cromwell*, 121.

So farre my princes prayse doth passe  
The *fa'moust* queene | : that ev | er was |.  
*Puttenham*. *Parthenides*, 16.

Sometimes the vowel was elided, in cases where, according to modern pronunciation, the *s* and *t* are given to different syllables ;

— She has in her . . .  
— all the truth of Christians,  
And all | their con | stancy | : *mod'esty* was made |  
When she was first intended. *Fletcher*. *Valentinian*, 1. 1.

Wilt | thou then serve | the *Phil'istines* : with | that gift |,  
Which was expressly given thee to annoy them ?  
*Samson Agon.* 577.

— I' the dead of darkness,  
The *min'isters* for | the pur | pose : hur | ried thence |  
Me and thy crying self. *Temp.* 1. 2. 131.

— To plainness honour's bound  
When *maj'sty* falls | to fol | ly : reverse | thy doom |.  
*Lear*, 1. 1. 150.

In the following examples the vowel belongs to an independent syllable ;

I had | in house | : so man | y *of'sars* still |  
Which were obayde and honour'd for their place,  
That carelesse I might sleepe or walke at will.  
*Drayton*. *M. for M.* *Wolsey*, 26.

— A silver flood  
Full | of great vir | tues : and | for *med'cine* good |.  
*F. Q.* 1. 11. 29.

— Her grace is a lone woman  
And ve | ry rich | : and if | she take | a *phant'sie*  
She will do strange things.  
*B. Jonson*. *The Alchemist*, 1. 1.

— Our pow'r

Shall do | a court|esy : to | our wrath, | which men |  
 May blame, but not control. Lear, 3. 7. 25.

— In his raging mind

He curs'd | all court|'sy : <sup>1</sup> and | unruly wind |.  
Hall. Sat. 3. 5. 19.

With blood | of guilt|less babes | : and in|nocents true |.  
F. Q. 1. 8. 35.

The in|nocent prey | : in haste | he does | forsake |.  
F. Q. 1. 6. 10.

In death | avow|ing : the in|nocence of | her son |.  
F. Q. 1. 5. 39.

Sluic'd | out his in|nocent soul | : through streams | of blood |.  
R. II. 1. 1. 103.

Bidding the dwarf with him to bring away  
 The Sar|azens shield | : sign | of the con|queror |.  
F. Q. 1. 2. 20.

And Brit|on fields | : with Sar|azen blood | bedy'd |.  
F. Q. 1. 11. 7.

#### COALITION OF WORDS.

We have now only to consider those cases in which a syllable has been lost by the meeting of two words.

The synalæpha or coalition of two vowels, is now tolerated in very few instances. We may elide the vowel of the definite article before its substantive, and sometimes, though more rarely, the vowel of *to* before its verb; but the ear is offended, if the *to* is made to coalesce with a narrow vowel as, *t' insist*, or the article with a broad one, as in the verses,

So spake | the apostate an|gel : tho' | in pain |. P. L. 1. 125.

The earth cum|ber'd and | the wing'd | air : dark | with plumes |.  
Comus. 730.

Formerly this union of the vowels was far more general. Chaucer melts the final *e* into the following word without scruple, and in some cases the Anglo-Saxons took the same

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<sup>1</sup> As from *phant'sie* came *fancy*, so from *court'sy* came *cursy*.

license. We also find Chaucer occasionally using the same liberty in other cases. His successors (fully alive to the convenience) followed his example, till Milton pushed this, as every other license, to the utmost. So frequently does it occur in the works of this poet, that several critics, among others Johnson, have given him credit for its invention, or rather, we should say, its introduction, for they suppose it borrowed from the Latin.

We will first give instances where the final vowel is narrow;

It is | reprev | e : and con | trary of | honour |  
For to be hold a common hasardour.

*Chau. The Pardoner's Tale ; C. T. 12529.*

And thereto he was hardy, wise, and rich,  
And pit | ous | : and just | and al | way ylich | e.

*The Squieres Tale ; C. T. 10333.*

And you that feel no woe when as the sound  
Of these my nightly cries ye hear apart,  
Let break | your soun | der sleep | : and pit | y augment |.

*Spenser. Shep. Kal. August. 187.*

As marks | to which | : my 'ndeav | our's steps | should bend |.

*B. Jonson. Cynthia's Revels, 5. 3.*

Stiff | ly to stand | on this | : and proud | ly approve |  
The play, might tax the maker of self-love.

*B. Jonson. Epil. to Cynthia's Revels.*

Pa | sion and ap | athy | : and glor | y and shame |. *P. L. 2. 564.*

In the following examples the final vowel is broad,

Then was gret shoving bothe to and fro,  
To lift him up, and muckle care and wo,  
So unweil | dy was | : this se | ly pal | led gost |.

*The Manciples Prologue ; C. T. 17002.*

And with | so exceed | ing fu | ry : at | him strake |,  
That forced him to stoop upon his knee. *F. Q. 1. 5. 12.*

Her doubtful words made that redoubted knight  
Suspect | her truth | : yet since | no untruth | he knew |  
Her fawning love with foul disdainful spite  
He would not shend. *F. Q. 1. 1. 53.*

*No ungrate | ful food | : and food | alike | those pure |*  
 Intelligential substances require,  
 As doth your rational.

*P. L. 5. 407.*

Ang | uish and doubt | and fear | : and sor | row and pain |.

*P. L. 1. 558.*

— Vouchsafe with us

*Two on | ly who yet | : by sov | ran gift | possess |*  
 This spacious ground, in yonder shady bower  
 To rest.

*P. L. 5. 365.*

The pronoun *it* not only coalesces with a vowel, as *be't*,  
*o't*, &c., but sometimes also with a consonant, as *is't*, *with't*,  
 &c.

If the ill spirit have so fair a house,  
 Good things | will strive | to dwell | *with't*.

*Tempest, 1. 2. 458.*

You taught | me lan | guage : and | my prof | it *on't* |  
 Is, I know how to curse.

*Tempest, 1. 2. 363.*

— If he may

Find mercy in the law, 'tis his; if none,  
 Let | him not *seek't* | of us | : by day | and night |  
 He's traitor to the height.

*H. VIII. 1. 2. 211.*

I say | it is | not lost | : *Fetch't*, | let me see | it.—

*Othello, 3. 4. 85.*

— His sword

Hath | a sharp edge | : it's long, | and it may | be said |  
 It reaches far.

*H. VIII. 1. 1. 109.*

We find *'t* before a vowel in *'tis*, and even before a consonant in the passage—

Which done, quoth he, "if outwardly you show  
 Sound, | *'t not* avails | : if in | wardly | or no |."

*Drayton. M. for M. Cromwell, 107.*

*To* also coalesces very freely with the word that follows it, whether verb, substantive, or pronoun.

When | she was dear | to us : we | did hold | her so |.

*Lear, 1. 1. 199.*

Mar | ried your roy | alty : was wife | to your place |,  
 \* Abhorr'd your person.

*Cymbeline, 5. 5. 39.*

For | a short day | or two | : retire | to your own | house.<sup>1</sup>

*Fletcher. Loyal Subject, 2. 1.*

From whence to England afterward I brought

Those slights of state deliver'd unto me,

In<sup>t</sup> which | were then | : but ver<sup>y</sup> few | that sought |.

*Drayton. M. for M. Cromwell, 38.*

To whom thus | the por|tress : of | hell-gate | replied |.

*P. L. 2. 746.*

— Since you prove so liberal

To refuse | such means | as this | : maintain | your voice | still

'T will prove your best friend. *Fletcher. Loyal Subject, 2. 1.*

The frier low lowting, crossing with his hand,

T<sup>r</sup> speak | with contri|tion, quoth | he : I | would crave |.

*Drayton. M. for M. Cromwell, 104.*

*His* is frequently joined to the preceding word, as are also the verb *is* and conjunction *as*.

Pond|ering on his voy|age : for | no nar|row frith |<sup>2</sup>

He had to cross.

*P. L. 2. 919.*

Go tell | the Duke | and his wife | : I'd speak | with them |.

*Lear, 2. 4. 117.*

A blink | o' rest's | a sweet | enjoy|ment.

*Burns. Two Dogs.*

They 're no | sae wretched's : ane | wad think |,

Though constantly on poortith's brink.

*Burns. Two Dogs.*

*Burns* has more than once joined the verb to the word that followed instead of [that] preceding it,

I doubt na, whiles, but thou may thieve,

What then? poor beastie, thou maun live,

A daimen-icker in a thrave

'S a sma' | request, |

I'll get a blessin wi' the lave,

And never miss't.

*Burns. To a Mouse.*

<sup>1</sup> [Here follows, in the former edition, a quotation from *Spenser, F. Q. 1. 10. 49* :

“ And ask'd | to what end | they clomb | : that heav'nly height.”

This is an oversight ; for the line is an Alexandrine :

“ And ask|ed to | what end | : they clomb that tedious height.”—W. W. S.]

<sup>2</sup> [“ Pondering his voyage ” is the usual reading.—W. W. S.]

Verbs beginning with *w* sometimes elided it, and coalesced with the word preceding, thus, in old English, we have *nas* for *ne was*, *not* for *ne wot*, *nere* for *ne were*, &c.

And by that Lord that cleped is St. Ive,

*Nere* | thou our bro | der : shuld | est thou | not thriv | e.

*Chau. The Sompnoures Tale; C. T. 7525.*

I tell | ye, to | my grief, | : *he was* base | ly mur | der'd.

*Fletcher. Valentinian, 4. 4.*

*You were* best | to go | to bed | : and dream | again |.

*2 H. VI. 5. 1. 196.*

Make | it not strange | : I know | *you were* one | could keep |

The butt'ry-hatch still lock'd.

*Alchemist, 1. 1.*

Wit | ness these wounds, | I do | : *they were* fair | ly giv'n |.

*Fletcher. Bonduca, 1. 1.*

*I would*, *we would*, &c., are still commonly pronounced *I'd*, *we'd*, &c., yet we often find them written at full length, in places where the rhythm only tolerates one syllable.

It would be useless to point out the coalition of the verb *have* with the personal pronouns. We, however, are constantly meeting with these contractions written at full length, *we have*, *you have*, &c., for *we've*, *you've*, &c.

The first personal pronoun seems to have been occasionally omitted before its verb, as in the phrases, '*pray thee*', '*beseech thee*', &c. I suspect it was omitted more frequently than the texts warrant us in asserting.

——— I honour him

Even | out of your | report | : But '*pray* | you tell | me

Is she sole child to the King?

*Cymb. 1. 1. 54.*

Your voic | es, Lords, | '*beseech* | you : let | her will |

Have a free way.<sup>1</sup>

*Oth. 1. 3. 261.*

*I presume* | she's still | the same | : I would | fain see | her.

*Fletcher. Loyal Subject, 5. 2.*

And, Father Card'nal, I have heard you say,

That we shall see and know our friends in heaven,

If that | be true | : *I shall* see | my boy | again |.

*King John, 3. 4. 76.*

<sup>1</sup> [Not in the Globe edition, which merely has the five words, "Let her have your voices."—W. W. S.]

The article *the* was frequently pronounced *th'*, and more particularly when it followed a preposition. The same pronunciation still prevails in the north. In Carr's Craven Dialogues, we meet with *ith'*, *oth'*, *toth'*, *forth'*, *byth'*, &c., also *anth'* and *auth'*, &c., for *and the*, *all the*, &c.

Amongst the rest rode that false lady faire,  
The foul Duessa, next unto the chair  
Of proud | Lucif|era | : as one | oth' train|. *F. Q. 1. 4. 37.*

And the Rom|ish rites | : that with | a clear|er sight|  
The wisest thought they justly did reject,  
They after saw that the received light  
Not altogether free was from defect.  
*Drayton. M. for M. Cromwell, 97.*

——— The flames,  
Driven backward, slope their pointing spires, and, roll'd  
In bil|lows, leave | i'the<sup>1</sup> midst | : a hor|rid vale|. *P. L. 1. 223.*

While the jol|ly Hours | : lead on | propitious May|. *Milton. Sonnets, 1. 4.*

Whose shrill saint's-bell hangs on his livery,  
While the rest | are dam|ned : to | the plumb|ery|. *Hall. Sat. 5. 1 (near the end).*

The fox was howling on the hill,  
And the dis|tant ech|oing glens | reply|. *Burns. A Vision.*

*It'h'* and *oth'* are often written *i'the*, *o'the*. This is a common but gross blunder. In the first place, the vowel is [then] not elided, and, secondly, the prepositions are [then] written as if contracted from *in* and *of*; but *i* and *o* are independent prepositions, which may be traced back through every century to the times of the Heptarchy.

In giving the many extracts I have quoted, I have scrupulously adhered to the *spelling* of my authors, or rather of their editors: Tyrwhitt's Chaucer, Steevens's Shakespeare, and Todd's Milton have been chiefly referred to, Tonson's Spenser, and either Gifford's or Tonson's Ben Jonson.

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<sup>1</sup> This is, I believe, the only instance of such contraction in the P.L.



## CHAPTER IV.

## ACCENT,

As the word is now used, means the *stress* which is laid upon a syllable during pronunciation; and in a more restricted sense, that *particular stress*, which defines the rhythm of a verse or sentence. The latter might perhaps be termed the rhythmical accent. It is of merely relative importance, and may be either one of the strong or one of the weak accents in the sentence; but *must* be stronger than that of any syllable immediately adjoining. We shall mark the rhythmical accent, as in the last chapter, by placing a vertical line after the accented syllable.

It has been matter of dispute, what constitutes the stress which thus distinguishes the accented syllable. Mitford, who deserves attention both as a musician and a man of sense, has entered deeply into this inquiry, and concludes with much confidence that it is merely an increased sharpness of tone. Wallis, who is at least an equal authority, assumes it to be an increase of loudness. I cannot help thinking that the latter opinion is the sounder one.

There are two reasons, which weigh strongly in my mind against the conclusion of Mitford. It is admitted on all hands, that the Scots give to the accented syllable a grave tone. Now, if our English accent consisted merely in sharpness of tone, it would follow that in the mouth of a Scotchman our accents would be misplaced. This, however, is not so; the accents follow in their proper place, and our verses still keep their rhythm, though pronounced with the strange intonations of a Fifeshire dialect.

Again, in a whisper there can be neither gravity nor sharpness of tone, as the voice is absent; yet even in a whisper the rhythm of a verse or sentence may be distinctly traced. I do not see what answer can be given to either of these objections.

But though an increase of loudness be the only thing *essential* to our English accent, yet it is in almost every instance accompanied by an increased sharpness of tone. This, of course, applies only to the prevailing dialect. The Scotchman, we have seen, pronounces *his* accented syllable with a grave tone, and in some of our counties I have met with what appeared to be the circumflex. But the Englishman of education marks the accented syllable with a sharp tone; and that in all cases, excepting those in which the laws of *emphasis* require a different intonation.

Besides the increase of loudness, and the sharper tone which distinguishes the accented syllable, there is also a tendency to dwell upon it, or, in other words, to lengthen its quantity. We cannot increase the loudness or the sharpness of a tone without a certain degree of muscular action; and to put the muscles in motion requires time. It would seem, that the time required for producing a perceptible increase in the loudness or sharpness of a tone, is greater than that of pronouncing some of our shorter syllables. If we attempt, for instance, to throw the accent on the first syllable of the verb *become*, we must either lengthen the vowel, and pronounce the word *bee|come*, or add the adjoining consonant to the first syllable, and so pronounce the word *bec|ome*. We often find it convenient to lengthen the quantity even of the longer syllables, when we wish to give them a very strong and marked accent. Hence, no doubt, arose the vulgar notion, that accent always lengthens the quantity of a syllable.

It is astonishing how widely this notion has misled men, whose judgment, in most other matters of criticism, it would be very unsafe to question. Our earlier writers, almost to a man, confound accent with quantity; and Johnson could not have had much clearer views on the subject when he told his reader that in some of Milton's verses, "the accent is equally upon two syllables together and upon both strong,—as

Thus at their shady lodge arrived, *both stood*,

*Both turn'd*, and under open sky adored

The God that made both sky, air, earth and heaven." *P. L.* 4. 720.

Every reader of taste would pronounce the words *stood*, *turn'd*, with a greater stress, than that which falls upon the words preceding them. But these words are at least equal to them in *quantity*; and Johnson fell into the mistake, at that time so prevalent, of considering quantity as identical with accent. Even of late years, when sounder notions have prevailed, one who is both critic and poet, has declared the word *Egypt* to be the only spondee in our language. Surely every one would throw a stronger accent on the first syllable than on the second!

In every word of two or more syllables there is one, which receives a stronger accent than any of the others. This may be called *the verbal accent*, as upon it depends the accentual importance of the word. When the word contains three or more syllables, there *may* be a second accent; this, of course, must be subordinate to the first, and is commonly called the *secondary accent*.

When a word of three syllables has its primary accent on the first, our poets have, in all ages, taken the liberty of giving a secondary accent to the third syllable, if their rhythm required it. Thus *harmony*, *victory*, and many others of the same kind, are often found in our poetry with the last syllable accented. The rule applies to words of any number of syllables, provided the chief accent falls on the last syllable but two.

An ignorance of this principle has led the Danish philologist Rask, into much false criticism. He objects to the Anglo-Saxon couplet,

Getim | brede |  
Tempel Gode.

He built  
To God a temple.

because the first verse has but one accent; and supposes that *heah*, or some such word, may have been omitted by the transcriber. The verse, however, *has* two accents, for a secondary one falls on the last syllable *de*. He pronounces another verse, consisting in like manner of one word, *ælmihht-ne*, to be faulty, and for the same reason; he even ventures to deny the existence of such a word in the language, and would substitute *ælmihhtig-ne*. Now, in the first

place, *æl|miht-ne|* may well form a verse of two accents, supposing a secondary accent to fall on the last syllable; and secondly, there are *two* adjectives, *almight* and *almighty*; the first is rare in Anglo-Saxon, but is often met with in old English, and beyond a doubt is used in the verse last quoted.<sup>1</sup>

A word of four syllables can hardly escape a secondary accent, unless the primary accent is on one of the middle syllables, when it falls under the same rule as the trisyllable. If it end in *ble*, it is occasionally pronounced with one accent, as *dis|putable*; but I think the more general usage is, to place a secondary accent on the last syllable, *dis|putable|*.

A word of five syllables, if accented on the first, cannot have less than two, and may have three, accents. We may pronounce the following word with two accents, *in|consol|able*, or with three, *in|consol|able|*. When the accent falls on one of the middle syllables, the word may, in some instances, take only one accent, as *indis|putable*.

When two syllables are separated by a pause, each of them *may* receive the accent, the pause filling the place of a syllable. In the verses

Vir|tue, beau|tie and speech| : did strike|—wound|—charm  
My heart|—eyes|—ears| : with won|der, love,| delight|.

*strike, wound, charm, heart, eyes* and *ears*, are all of them accented, though only separated by a pause.

It is probable, that at one time every stop, which separated the members of a sentence, was held, for rhythmical purposes, equivalent to a syllable. At present, however, it is only under certain circumstances that the pause takes a place so important to the rhythm.

As no pause can intervene between the syllables of a word, it follows that no two of its adjacent syllables can be accented. There was however a period, when even this rule was violated. After the death of Chaucer, the final *e*, so commonly used by that poet and his contemporaries, fell into disuse. Hence many dissyllables became words of one

<sup>1</sup> [Or accent also the *second* syllable; see Daniel, 195, ed. Grein.—W. W. S.]

syllable, *mone* became moon, and *sunne* sun; and the compounds, into which they entered, were curtailed of a syllable. The couplet,

Ne was she darke, ne browne, but bright  
And clere | as is | : the *mon*|e *light*|.

*Romaunt of the Rose*, 1009.

would be read, as if *mone light* were a dissyllable; and as the metre required two accents in the compound, they would still be given to it, though less by a syllable. By degrees this barbarous rhythm became licensed, though it never obtained much favour, and has been long since exploded. Spenser has left us some examples of it.

*Per.* All as the sunny beam so bright,

*Wil.* Hey | ho | the *sun*|-*beam* |!

*Per.* Glanceth from Phœbus' face forthright,

*Wil.* So love into thy heart did stream. . . .

*Per.* Or as Dame Cynthia's silver ray,

*Wil.* Hey | ho | the *moon*|-*light* |!

*Per.* Upon the glittering wave doth play,

*Wil.* Such play is a piteous plight!

*Shep. Kal. August*, 83.

We have said that the rhythmical accent must be stronger than that of any syllable immediately adjoining. When the verbal accent is both preceded and succeeded by an unaccented syllable in the same word, it is, of course, independent of the position such word may occupy in a sentence. But when the accent falls on the first or last syllable, it is not necessarily preserved, when the word is combined with others; or—to vary the expression—the verbal accent is not necessarily the same as the *accent of construction*. Thus the word *father* has an accent on its first syllable, but in the lines

Look |, *father*, look |, and you'll laugh | to see |  
How he gazes | and glares | with his eyes | on thee |.

such accented syllable adjoins a word, which has a stronger stress upon it, and consequently loses its accent. The verbal accent, however, can only be eclipsed by a stronger accent, thus immediately adjoining. The license, which is sometimes taken, of slurring over an accent, when it begins the

verse, is opposed to the very first principles of accentual rhythm. In Moore's line,

Shining on|, shining on|, by no shad|ow made ten|der.

the verbal accent of *shining* is eclipsed, in the second foot, by the stronger accent on the word *on*; but in the first it adjoins only to an unaccented syllable, and therefore remains unchanged. It is true, that by a rapid pronunciation, and by affixing a very strong accent to the third syllable, we may slur it over; but, in such case, the rhythm is at the mercy of the reader; and no poet has a right to a false accent, in order to help his rhythm. Neither length of usage, nor weight of authority, can justify this practice.

When a verse is divided into two parts or sections, by what is called the middle pause, the syllable, which follows such pause, is in the same situation as if it began the verse, and cannot lose its accent, unless it be succeeded by a more strongly accented syllable. In this case, however, the same license is often taken as in the last, particularly in the triple metre.

As Emphasis and Accent are too often confounded, I shall add a few words on the nature of the former, and endeavour to shew, in what particulars they resemble, and in what they are distinguished from each other.

A very common method of pointing out an emphatic word or syllable is by placing a pause, or emphatic stop, before it. There is little doubt that this pause was known from the earliest periods of our language, and that it had a considerable influence in regulating the flow of our earlier rhythms. It is still common, and indeed in almost hourly use.

When I burned in desire to question them further, they made themselves—*air*, into which they vanished.

*Macbeth*, 1. 5. 3.

If the accent be on the first syllable, our expectation is not only excited by the pause, but the accent becomes more marked; and as the importance of a word depends on that of its accented syllable, the word itself stands the more

prominently forward in the sentence. This method of heightening the accent is sometimes used, even when the first syllable is unaccented, and when consequently the pause must fall in the midst of the word. Thus we hear some persons who spell, as it were, the words *pro-digious*, *di-rectly*, in order to throw the greater stress on the second syllable. One result, that follows from this mis-pronunciation, is a tendency to fix, in some degree, the pause on the first syllable, and thereby to lengthen its vowel.

Another method of marking the emphasis, is a strengthening of the accent, without any precedent stop. We have seen, that under such circumstances the speaker is apt to dwell upon the accented word or syllable. Hence we sometimes find, that the emphatic word lengthens its quantity. When the vulgar wish to throw an emphasis on the word *little*, they pronounce it *leetle*.

But the chief difficulty occurs, when the emphatic syllable adjoins upon one, which ought, according to the usual laws of construction, to be more strongly accented. In such a case, we very commonly have a transference of the accent. In Shakespeare's verse,

Is | this | *the* | Lord Tal | bot : unc | le Glos | ter ?

1 H. VI. 3. 4. 13.

the emphasis, which is thrown on the article, gives it an accent, stronger than that of the word either preceding or succeeding. Sometimes, however, it would seem, that we distinguish the emphatic syllable by mere sharpness of tone; and leave the stress of the voice, or in other words the essential part of the accent, on the ordinary syllable. Thus in Spenser's line,

Flesh | may *im*pair, | quoth she | : but rea | son can | *re*pair |.

F. Q. 1. 7. 41.

both the rhythm, and the common laws of accentuation will have the last syllable of *repair* accented; but the purposes of contrast require that the first syllable should be *emphatic*. The stress therefore falls on the last syllable, and the sharp tone on the first. In the same way must be read Milton's verses,

Who made | our laws | to bind | us : not | himself |.

*Sam. Agon.* 309.

Knowing who |, I am | : as I | know who | thou art |.

*P. R.* 1. 356.

In some cases a very intimate acquaintance with a poet's rhythm is necessary, to know whether he intended to mark his emphasis by a transference of the accent, or by mere change of intonation.

#### ACCENT OF CONSTRUCTION.

This branch of our subject may perhaps be treated most advantageously, if, in each case, we first state the law, which has been sanctioned by the general usage of our language; and then notice such violations of it, as have arisen from making it *yield*, instead of *adapting* it, to the laws of metre.

Of all the words that may be used in the construction of an English sentence, the articles are the least important. In the greater number of cases, in which they are now met with, they are useless for any purposes of grammar, were unknown to our older dialects, and still sound strangely in the ears of our country population. The circumstances, which justify their accentuation, are accordingly rare; yet by the poets of the 16th century they were sometimes accented even more strongly than their substantive.

Skill, which practice small

Will bring, | and short |ly make | you : a<sup>1</sup> | maid Mar | tial |.

*F. Q.* 3. 3. 53.

——— This man is great,

Mighty and fear'd; that lov'd, and highly favour'd;

A third | thought wise | and learn | ed : a | fourth rich |,

And there | fore hon | our'd : a | fifth rare | ly fea | tur'd.

*Ben Jonson. Every Man out of his Humour,* 1. 1.

Yet full | of val | our : the<sup>1</sup> | which did | adorn |  
His meanness much—

*F. Q.* 6. 3. 7.

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<sup>1</sup> Here the definite and indefinite articles are placed upon the same footing. Now the latter originally was nothing more than the first cardinal number, and must, when placed in construction, have obeyed the same law as regards



——— This is noted,  
 And gen|'rally | : whoev|er *the* | king fa|vours,  
 The Cardinal instantly will find employment,  
 And far enough from court too. *H. VIII.* 2. 1. 46.

But a more common fault—one of which even Pope was guilty—is the accentuation of the article when it occurs before the adjective.

Defence | is a | good cause | : and heav'n | be for | us.  
*Comus*, 489.

See the heavy clouds low falling,  
 And bright Hesperus down calling  
*The* | dead night | : from un|der ground|. *Fletcher. Faithful Shep.* 2. 2.

*The* | poor wight | : is al|most dead|  
 On the ground his wounds have bled.  
*Fletcher. Faithful Shep.* 3. 1.

She | was not *the* | prime cause | : but I | myself|. *Samson*, 234.

The treach|'rous col|ours : *the* | fair art | betray|,  
 And all the bright creation fades away.  
*Pope. Essay on Criticism*, 492.

In words | as fash|ions : *the* | same rule | will hold|. *Pope. Essay on Criticism*, 333.

There is, however, one position of the article, which seems to warrant its accentuation, even when not emphatic. It is that, which leaves it adjacent only to unaccented syllables. In the language of ordinary life the article, even in this case, is seldom accented. The words *a revol|ter* would be pronounced with a stress of voice, regularly increasing to the third syllable. But, in the measured language of composition, no words can be slurred over, or run the one into the other; and it seems not only venial, but even more correct and proper, to accent the article *a* | *re-*

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its accentuation. As the cardinal numbers were accented more strongly than the accompanying substantive, it follows that the examples quoted from Spenser and Jonson are instances rather of an *obsolete* than of a false accentuation, though such a mixture of the old with the new system is still open to objection.

*vol|ter*. For these reasons I would not object to the following verses,

A murd|'rer, a | revol|ter : and | a vil|lain.

*Samson*, 1180.

I pray'd for children, and thought barrenness  
In wed|lock a | reproach | : I gain'd | a son|.

*Samson*, 352.

Still | to the last | it rank|les : a | disease|.

*Byron*. *Ch. Harold*, 2. 35

Who with the horror of her hapless care

Hastily starting up, like men dismay'd

Ran af|ter fast | to res|cue : the | distres|sed maid|.

*F. Q.* 6. 3. 24.

The | divine Des|demo|na. What | is she? *Oth.* 2. 1. 73.

The two last examples are however open to objection on another ground. When a verse, or section of a verse, begins with an accent, such accent should never be a weak one.

A word must necessarily be of less importance than that whose relations it merely indicates ; hence the accentuation of the preposition above its noun, is offensive.

Opprest with hills of tyranny cast on virtue

By | the light fan|cies of | fools : thus | transport|ed.

*Ben. Jonson*. *Cynthia's Revels*, 5. 4.

——— Foretasted fruit,

Profan'd | first | by the ser|pent : by | him first|

Made common.

*P. L.* 9. 929.

——— Else had the spring

Perpetual smil'd on earth with vernant flow'rs,

Equal in days and nights, except to those

Beyond | the po|lar cir|cles : to | them day|

Had unbenighted shone.

*P. L.* 10. 678.

In the two extracts from Milton, the pronouns require an emphasis, which makes the false accentuation still more glaring.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Prepositions formerly took the accent before personal pronouns, and, indeed, still do so in some of our provincial dialects ; the accentuation therefore is not properly speaking *false*, though it takes the reader by surprise, more particularly as the emphasis falls on the pronouns in the two cases here cited.

All words which qualify others, as adjectives, adverbs, and others of the same class, receive a fainter accent than the words qualified.

It has been observed,<sup>1</sup> that when "a monosyllabic adjective and substantive are joined, the substantive has the acute, and the adjective the grave, unless the adjective be placed in antithesis, in which case the reverse happens." This rule might have been stated more generally. The primary accent of the adjective ought *always*, when not emphatic, to be weaker than that of the substantive. But when the reviewer states this law to have been "observed by all our best poets," and censures Darwin and his contemporaries as its first violators, he is lauding our earlier writers most unfairly. If authority, in a case like this, were of any weight, it might easily be found;

Help'd | by the *great* | pow'r : of | the vir | tuous moon |.

*Fletcher. Faithful Shepherdess*, 2. 2.

Lest | the *great* | Pan : do | awake |.

*Same*, 1. 1.

Thy chaster beams play on the heavy face

Of all | the world | : mak | ing the *blue* | sea smile |.

*Fletcher. Faithful Shep.* 2. 1.

——— I think a traitor——

No *ill* | words! let | his own | shame : first | revile | him.

*Fletcher. Bonduca*, 2. 4.

The dominations, royalties, and rights

Of this | oppres | sed boy | : this | is thy el | dest *son's* | son,

Unfortunate in nothing but in thee.

*K. John*, 2. 1. 176.

——— Hath any ram

Slipt | from the fold | : or *young* | kid lost | its dam |?

*Comus*, 497.

The more correct schools of Dryden and Pope carefully avoided this error, but our modern poets are not so scrupulous. The faults of the Elizabethan writers are more readily caught than their beauties;

Decipit exemplar vitiis imitabile.

The possessive pronoun falls of course under the same

<sup>1</sup> Ed. Rev. No. 12. Art. 10.

law as the adjective; but when coupled with an adjective receives the weaker accent. The violation of this rule is but too common among those writers to whom allusion has been made.

In wine | and oil | : they wash | en *his* | wounds wide |.  
F. Q. 1. 5. 17.<sup>1</sup>

And dark | some dens |, where Ti | tan : *his* | face nev | er shows |.  
F. Q. 2. 5. 27.

That | I may sit | : and pour | out *my* | sad sprite |  
Like running water.<sup>2</sup>  
Fletcher. *Faithful Shepherdess*, 4. 4.

The sweeping fierceness : which his soul betray'd,  
The skill | with which | he wield | ed : *his* | keen blade |.  
Byron. *Lara*, 7.

And then | as *his* | faint breath | ing : wax | es low |.  
Byron. *Lara*, 17.

It is doubtless under the same law, that the word *own* takes the accent after the possessive pronouns; a rule which is violated by Pope in the very couplet in which he denounces the critics;

Against | the po | et : *their* | own arms | they turn'd |,  
Sure to hate most the men from whom they learn'd.  
*Essay on Criticism*, 106.

Another law of English accentuation is, that the personal and relative pronoun[s] take a fainter accent than the verb.

And mingled them with perfect verily,  
That like | a live | ly sang | uine : *it* | seem'd to | the eye |.  
F. Q. 3. 8. 6.

———— That sea-beast  
Leviathan, which God of all his works  
Crea | ted hu | gest : *that* | swim th' o | cean-stream |.  
P. L. 1. 200.

<sup>1</sup> [But the Globe edition has:—"They wash | his wound | es wide." This is obviously right; *woundes* being dissyllabic, as has been shewn above, p. 66. —W. W. S.]

<sup>2</sup> This verse of Fletcher has even more than his usual proportion of blunders. With proper accents it would belong to the triple measure.

That | I may sit | and pour out | my sad sprite |.

Such is certainly the right scanning of this puzzling line, for the first and all the early editions elide the vowel. We may hence see the danger of printing Milton without elisions. As the line stands in the modern editions, every reader would accent it thus,

Crea|ted hu|gest : that swim | the o|cean-stream|.

No one would be bold enough to risk a false accent, in order to avoid an awkward and spiritless rhythm.

It remains to consider the law, which regulates the accents of a *sequence*.

When two or more words of the same kind follow each other consecutively, they all take an equal accent. If they are monosyllables, a pause intervenes between every two. It is probably for this reason, and on account of the great number of English monosyllables, that we find such frequent violations of a law so obvious and important.

*Fear*, sick|ness, age | : *loss*, la|bour, sor|row, strife|,  
*Pain*, hun|get, cold | : that makes | the heart | to quake,  
 And ever fickle fortune rageth rife. F. Q. 1. 9. 44.

So shall | *wrath*, jeal|ousy | : *grief*, love, | die and | decay|.  
F. Q. 2. 4. 35.

Infer|nal hags| : cen|taurs, *fiends*, hip|podames|.  
F. Q. 2. 9. 50.

———— The hec|tick,  
*Gout*, lep|rosie | : or some | such loath'd | disease|.  
Ben Jonson. Every Man out of his Humour, 1. 1. ;

I am | a man | : and | I have limbs|, *flesh*, blood|,  
*Bones*, sin|ews and | a soul| : as well | as he|. Same, 2. 2.

Where he gives her many a rose  
 Sweeter than the breath that blows,  
 The leaves | , *grapes*, ber|ries : of | the best|.  
Fletcher. Faithful Shep. 3. 1.

High-climbing rock, low sunless dale,  
*Sea*, des|ert, what | : do these | avail| ?  
Wordsworth. White Doe of Rylstone, 7. 14.

False accentuation very often leads to ambiguity. In the last passage, there might be a question, whether the author did not mean the *sea-desert*, the *waste of ocean*.

When the words are collected into groups, this law of sequence affects the groups only, and not the individuals. Thus I think there would be no fair objection to the mode in which Byron accents the verse,

*Young old* |, *high low* |, at once | : the same | *diver* | *sion share* |.  
*Childe Harold*, l. 71.

Nor to Milton's famous line,

*Rocks, caves* |, *lakes, fens* |, *bogs, dens*, |<sup>1</sup> : and shades | of death |.

This last verse has been variously accented. Mitford accents the first six words, thus making it a verse of *eight* accents, though Milton wrote his poem in verses of *five*.

The same law will hold when the words are in groups of three together.

Before we close this section, it should be observed, that the rule, which we have applied to the article, is a general one. There is no word, however unimportant, which may not be accented, when it lies adjacent only to unaccented syllables. We have already given examples where the article is accented ; to add others would be useless.

#### VERBAL ACCENT. FOREIGN.

The accentuation of foreign words, naturalized in our language, has always been varying ; one while inclining to the English usage, at another to the foreign. We will first treat of proper names, which have come to us, either mediately or immediately, from the Latin. At present, we give them Latin accents, when they have all their syllables complete ; and English accents when they are mutilated. But nothing was more common, down to the end of Elizabeth's reign, than to find the perfect Latin word with its accents distributed according to the English fashion ;

Till | that the pal | e : *Sat* | *urnus* | the col | de  
 That knew so many of adventures olde.

*Chau. The Knightes Tale ; C. T. 2445.*

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<sup>1</sup> *Dens* means a low woody bottom, such as often marks a stream or water-course ; hence it is coupled with *bog*.

Sat|urnus thon|e : sund|-búende hét|on.

Saturnus him sea-dwellers hight. *Alfred, Met. 26. 48.*

Such one was once, or once I was mistaught,  
A smith | at Vul|canus | : own forge | up brought|.

*Hall. Satires, 2. 1. 45.*

In sterres, many a winter ther-beorn,  
Was writ | the deth | : of Hec|tor, Ach|illes|—

*Chau. The Man of Lawes Tale; C. T. 4617.*

Hit gesealde gió : on sume tíde  
Thæt Au|lizes | : un|derhæf|de  
Thæm Cásere : cynericu twá.

It fell of yore, upon a time,  
That Aulixes<sup>1</sup> had under  
The Kaiser kingdoms two.

*Alfred, Met. 26. 4.*

Befor|e hire stood | : hire son|e Cu|pido|,  
Upon his shoulders winges hadde he two.

*Chau. The Knightes Tale; C. T. 1965.*

Wær|on E|gypte : eft | on-cyr|de.

Again were the Egyptians turned back.

*Cadmon, Exod. 451.*

These writers give us the Latin accents, whenever it suits their rhythm.

During the 14th century we got even our Latin from the French. Latin names were, accordingly, often used with French accents, and that to the very end of the 16th century.

Fayr|est of fayr|e : o la|dy min | Venus|,  
Daughter to Jove, and spouse of Vulcanus.

*Chau. The Knightes Tale; C. T. 2223.*

The dreint | Lean|dre : for | his faire | Hero|,  
The teres of Heleine, and eke the wo

Of Briseide. *Chau. The Man of Lawes Prol.; C. T. 4489.*

Hec|tor and Her|cules | : with false | Sino|,  
Their minds did make them weave the web of woe.

*Mirr. for M. Egelred, 3.*

Of Lu|crece and | : of Bab|ylon | Thisbe|,  
The sword of Dido, for the false Enee.

*Chau. The Man of Lawes Prol.; C. T. 4483.*

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<sup>1</sup> That is, Uliesses.

—— A cranny'd hole or chink,  
 Through which | the lov|ers : Pyr|amus and | *Thisby* |  
 Did whisper often very secretly. *M. N. Dream, 5. 1. 159.*

Shakespeare elsewhere accents it *This|by*; he doubtless put the old and obsolete accent into the mouth of his "mechanicals," for the purposes of ridicule.

French accent was particularly prevalent in such words, as had been robbed by our neighbours of one or more syllables.

Thou glader of the mount of Citheron,  
 For thil|ke lov|e : thou had|dest to | *Adon* |,  
 Have pitee. *Chau. The Knights Tale; C. T. 2225.*

Ambitious Sylla : and stern Marius,  
 High Cæ|sar, great | *Pompey* | : and fierce | *Anton*|ius|. *F. Q. 1. 5. 49.*

Him thought | how that | : the wing|ed god | *Mercur*|y  
 Before him stood, and bad him to be mery.  
*Chau. The Knights Tale; C. T. 1387.*

All such words we now accent after the English fashion,  
*Pom|pey, Mer|cury, Di|an, &c.*

When the last syllable of a French word does not contain the *e* final, it almost invariably takes the accent; in English words, the accent is generally upon the first. Now the "makers" of the 14th century, in raising our language once more to the dignity of *courtly* verse, unhappily, but very naturally, had recourse to the dialect, which had so long been used for the purposes of poetical expression. In Skinner's phrase, "cart-loads" of French words were poured into the language. These for the most part had a doubtful accentuation, English or French, as best suited the convenience of the rhythm. This vicious and slovenly practice may be traced as late as to the reign of Elizabeth. In the following instances of French accentuation, I shall in each case take, first the words of two syllables, and then those of three or more;

A pren|tis whil|om dwelt | : in our | *citee* |,  
 And of a craft of vitailers was he.  
*Chau. The Cokes Tale; C. T. 4363.*



——— So meek a look hath she,  
I may | not you | devis | e : all hire | *beautee* |,  
But thus much of hire *beautee* tell I may.

*Chaucer. C. T. 9619.*

For quhar | it fail | yeys : na *wertu* |  
May be | off price | : na off *waku* |. *The Bruce*, l. 371.

For well thou wost thyselfen veraily,  
That thou | and I | : be dam | ned to | *prison* |  
Perpet | uel | : us gain | eth no | *raunson* |.

*Chau. The Knightes Tale ; C. T. 1176.*

And when that he wel dronken had the win,  
Then | wold he speke | en : no | word but | *Latin* |.

*Chau. Prol. 639.*

This | was thin oath | : and min | also | *certain* |,  
I wot it wel thou durst it not withsain.

*Chau. The Knightes Tale ; C. T. 1141.*

For which thy child was in a crois yrent,  
Thy bliss | ful ey | en saw | : all his | *turment* |.

*Chau. M. of Lawes Tale ; C. T. 5264.*

And, sikerly, she was of gret disport,  
And ful | *pleasant* | : and a | *miable* | of port |.

*Chau. Prol. 137.*

——— He dorste make avaunt,  
He wis | te that | a man | : was *re* | *pentaunt* |.

*Chau. Prol. 227.*

Of all God's works, which do this world adorn,  
There is no one more fair and excellent,  
Than is man's body both for power and form,  
Whiles it is kept in sober government,  
But none | than it | : more foul | and *in* | *decent* |  
Distemper'd through misrule. *F. Q. 2. 9. 1.*

Some words in *n* still accent the last syllable, but in that case lengthen the vowel, as *saloon*, *dragoon*, *cartoon*, *divine*, &c. Many words too are spelt with the long *i*, though now pronounced with the short, as *sanguine*, &c.<sup>1</sup>

Ther nis | ywis | : no ser | pent so | *cruel* |,  
When man treadeth on his tail, ne half so fel.

*Chau. The Sompnoures Tale ; C. T. 7583.*

<sup>1</sup> *Native, positive, abusive, expensive*, &c., are still pronounced with a long *i* in Norfolk ; see Forby's "Glossary," p. 14. The American pronunciation is the same.

The par|dale swift| : and | the ti|ger *cruell*|,  
The antelope and wolf, both fierce and fell.

*F. Q. 1. 6. 26.*

Caus'd | him agree| : they might | in parts | *equal*|  
Divide the realm, and promist him a gard  
Of sixty knights, on him attending still at call.

*Higgins. M. for M. Queen Cordila, 17.*

It were, | quod he| : to thee | no gret | *honour*|,  
For | to be false| : ne | for to be | *traitour*|.

*Chau. The Knightes Tale; C. T. 1131.*

— Our governour,  
And | of our tal|es : jug|e and *re|portour*|.

*Chau. Prol. 815.*

Beyond | all past | exam|ple : and | *future*|.

*P. L. 10. 840.*

The other adjectives in *ure* are still accented on the last syllable, as *obscure, secure, mature, &c.*

She | was so char|itable| : and so | *pitous*|,  
She wolde wepe if that she saw a mous  
Caught in a trappe.

*Chau. Prol. 143.*

— Mighty Theseus,

That | for to hun|ten : is | so *de|sirous*|.

*Chau. Knightes Tale; C. T. 1673.*

Adjectives in *ose, ise, use*, still take the accent on the last syllable, as *verbose, precise, obtuse, &c.*

— That telleth in this cas,  
Tal|es of best | sentenc|e : and most | *solas*|.

*Chau. Prol. 799.*

I you | forgev|e all hol|ly : this | *trespas*|.

*Chau. Knightes Tale; C. T. 1820.*

— How should, alas !

Silly old man that lives in hidden cell,  
Bid|ding his beads | all day| : for his | *trespass*|,  
Tydings of war and worldly trouble tell ? *F. Q. 1. 1. 30.*

By pol|icy| : and long | *process* | of time|. *P. L. 2. 297.*

But subtle Archimago, when his guests

He saw divided into double parts,

And U|na wand|'ring in | : woods | and *forrests*|, &c.

*F. Q. 1. 2. 9.*

If a French word end with the final *e*, the penultimate syllable is always accented. When such word was brought into our language, the final *e* was either dropt or

changed into *y*. The accent fell accordingly either on the last, or the penultimate syllable.

The ending *ie* once formed two syllables with an accent on the *i*. This accent long kept its place even when the *e* was lost ;

Quod The|seus| : hav|e ye so gret | envi|e  
Of myn honour, that thus complain and crie.

*Chau. The Knights Tale ; C. T. 909.*

Before | her stan|deth : dan|ger and | envy|,<sup>1</sup>  
Flattery, desceyt, mischeife, and tyranny.

*Sir T. More. Boke of Fortune.*

There many minstrels maken melodie,

To drive | away| : the dull | melan|choly|. *F. Q. 1. 5. 3.*

The following examples will be ranged in the like order ; first, those words which retained the *e* final, and afterwards those in which it had been lost ;

—— Wel coud he playe on a giterne,

In all | the toun| : nas brew|hous ne | tavern|e

That he ne visited.

*Chau. Milleres Tale ; C. T. 3333.*

—— In forme and reverence,

And shorte | and quicke| : and full | of high | senten|ce.

*Chau. Prol. 307.*

That this | Soudan| : hath caught | so gret | plesan|ce

To han | hire fig|ure : in | his re|membran|ce,

That all his lust, and all his besy cure,

Was for to love hire.

*Chau. Man of Lawes Tale ; C. T. 4606.*

This se|ly car|penter| : had gret | merveil|le

Of Nicholas, or what thing might him aile.

*Chau. Milleres Tale ; C. T. 3423.*

And led | their life | : in gret | trawail|,

And oft | in hard| : stour off | bataill|.

*The Bruce, 1. 23.*

And ov|er his hed| : ther shin|en two | figur|es

Of sterr|es, that | ben clep|ed : in | scriptur|es,

That on Puella, that other Rubeus.

*Chau. The Knights Tale ; C. T. 2045.*

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<sup>1</sup> *Enemy, envý*, are still so pronounced in Norfolk ; see Forby's "Glossary," p. 105.

Thin | is the vic|torie : of | this av|entur|e,  
Full blisful in prison mayst thou endure.

*Chau. The Knightes Tale ; C. T. 1237.*

And do | that I | to mor|we : may han | victor|ie,  
Min be the travaille, and thin be the glorie.

*Chau. The Knightes Tale ; C. T. 2407.*

Ther saw I many another wonder storie,  
The which | me list | : not draw|en to | memo|rie.

*Chau. The Knightes Tale ; C. T. 2075.*

To put in wryt a suthfast storie,  
That | it lest ay | furth : in | memo|ry.

*The Bruce, l. 14.*

For who|so mak|eth God | : his ad|versa|ry,  
As | for to werk|en : an|y thing in | contra|ry  
Of his will, certes, never shal he thrive.

*The Chanones Yeomannes Tale ; C. T. 16944.*

Wel coude he rede a lesson or a storie,  
But al|der-best | he sung | : an of|ferto|rie.

*Chau. Prol. 711.*

And over all ther as profit shuld arise,  
Cur|teis he was | : and low|ly of | servis|e.

*Chau. Prol. 249.*

For in the land ther nas no craftes man, . . .  
Ne por|treiour | : ne car|ver of | imag|es,  
That Theseus ne gaf him mete and wages.

*Chau. The Knightes Tale ; C. T. 1899.*

A not|-hed had|de he : with | a brown | visag|e,  
Of wood|craft coud|e he wel | : al | the usag|e.

*Chau. Prol. 109.*

——— : gret | is thin av|antag|e,  
More than is min, that sterve here in a cage.

*Chau. The Knightes Tale ; C. T. 1295.*

And as thou art a rightful lord and juge,  
Ne gev|e us ney|ther : mer|cie ne | refug|e.

*Chau. The Knightes Tale ; C. T. 1721.*

With us | ther was | : a doo|tour of | phisik|e,  
In all this world, ne was ther none him like  
To speke of phisike.

*Chau. Prol. 413.*

——— Manie

Engen|dered of | humours | : melan|cholik|e,  
Befor|en : in | his cel|le fan|tastik|e.

*Chau. The Knightes Tale ; C. T. 1376.*

One of our souls had wander'd in the air,  
 Ban|ish'd this frail | *sepul|chre* : of | our flesh|. *R. II. 1. 3. 194.*

But all | be that | he was | : a *phil|oso|phre*,  
 Yet hadde he but litel gold in coffre. *Chau. Prol. 299.*

Again | his might | : ther gain|en non | *obsta|cles*,  
 He may | be clep|ed : a god | for his | *mira|cles*.  
*Chau. The Knightes Tale; C. T. 1789.*

A the|atre| : a pub|lick *re|cepta|cle*  
 For giddy humour and diseased riot.  
*Ben Jon. E. Man in his Humour, 2. 1.*

As | in a vault | : an an|cient *re|cepta|cle*.  
*R. and J. 4. 3. 39.*

Lest par|adise| : a *re|cepta|cle* prove |  
 To spirits foul. *P. L. 11. 123.*

Chaucer generally makes the ending *acle* but one syllable; and perhaps it may be a question if it ever fills the place of two syllables in his writings. The same remark applies to the endings *able* and *ible*; but as it would be dangerous, without the assistance of a better edition, to lay down any *positive* rule upon the subject, I shall follow the usual practice in dividing them.

I can|not saine| : if that | it be | *possi|ble*,<sup>1</sup>  
 But Ve|nus had | him ma|ked : in|*visi|ble*,  
 Thus sayth the booke. *Chau. Legende of Dido, 97.*

Of his diete mesurable was he,  
 For it was of no great superfluitee,  
 But | of vast nour|ishing| : and *di|gesti|ble*.  
 His study was but litel on the Bible. *Chau. Prol. 437.*

For all afore that semed fair and bright,  
 Now base | and *con|tempti|ble* : did | appear|. *F. Q. 4. 5. 14.*

For possible is, sin thou hast hire presence,  
 And art a knight, a worthy and an able,  
 That | by some cas|, sin For|tune is | *changea|ble*  
 Thou maiest to thy desir sometime attaine.  
*Chau. The Knightes Tale; C. T. 1242.*

<sup>1</sup> Compare *lamentable*, *abominable*, as pronounced in Norfolk; see Forby's "Glossary," p. 105.

Stor|yss to rede|: are *de|lita|bill*,  
 Suppose that thai be nocht bot fabill. *The Bruce*, 1. 1.

Your fair discourse hath been as sugar,  
 Mak|ing the hard | way : sweet | and *de|lecta|ble*.  
*R. II.* 2. 3. 6.

It can|not but | arrive|: most *ac|cepta|ble*.  
*B. Jons. Ev. Man out of his Humour*, 1. 1 (*The Stage*).

————— Let us not then pursue  
 By force impossible, by leave obtained  
 Un|accepta|ble : though | in heaven|, our state|  
 Of splendid vassalage. *P. L.* 2. 249.

With huge | force and|: in|supporta|ble main|.  
*F. Q.* 1. 7. 11.<sup>1</sup>

And won|dred at|: their *im|paca|ble* stour|.  
*F. Q.* 4. 9. 22.

There are also certain substantives in our language, which are closely connected with the past participle of the Latin; these long retained their Latin accent on the last syllable.

————— Introduce  
 Law | and *edict* | on us|: who | without law|  
 Err not. *P. L.* 5. 797.

————— Strongly drawn  
 By this | new-felt | affec|tion: and | *instinct*|.  
*P. L.* 10. 262.

Wooring poor craftsmen with the craft of smiles . . .  
 As't were | to ban|ish: their | *affects* | with him|.  
*R. II.* 1. 4. 28.

Most ug|ly shapes|: and horr|ible | *aspects*|.  
*F. Q.* 2. 12. 23.

And | for our eyes|: do hate | the dire | *aspect*|  
 Of civil wounds. *R. II.* 1. 3. 127.

His words | here en|ded : but | his meek | *aspect*|  
 Silent yet spake. *P. L.* 3. 266.

Milton also accents the first syllable, *as|pect*,<sup>2</sup> but the

<sup>1</sup> [Or perhaps: *insup|porta|ble*, with the accent on *sup*. So, perhaps, *un|ac|cepta|ble* just above. But it does not affect the argument.—W. W. S.]

<sup>2</sup> [I cannot find that he does so; see all the passages, viz., *P. L.* 2. 301, 3. 266, 4. 541, 5. 733, 6. 81, 313, 450, 7. 379, 8. 336, 10. 454; *P. R.* 3. 217; also *P. L.* 10. 658, Com. 694.—W. W. S.]

older writers, almost invariably, give us the Latin accent. Dr. Farmer at once declared against the genuineness of "The Double Falsehood," which Theobald and others had ascribed to Shakespeare, because this word was always found accented on the first syllable. This was bold, but warrantable criticism.

#### VERBAL ACCENT. ENGLISH.

One of the most important rules is that, which bids us accent the root, whether verb or substantive, more strongly than in its inflection; as in the words, *lov|est, lov|eth, lov|ing, lov|ed, smit|eth, smit|ing, smit|ten, fox|es, ox|en, chil|dren.*

The old ending of the present participle was occasionally accented, during the 14th and 15th centuries; and sometimes, though more rarely, the modern termination *ing*.

And | suth thyn | ges : that are | *likand* |  
Tyll man | nys her | ing : ar | *plesand* |. *Bruce, 1. 9.*

———— The scaith  
That | toward thaim | : was *ap | perand* |  
For that at the King of England  
Held swylyk freyndschip. *Bruce, 1. 82.*

Wherefore laude and honour to such a king,  
From dole | ful daun | ger us so | *defending* |.  
*Dingley. M. for M. Flodden Field, 24.*

Under this head may be ranged our verbal substantives, whether denoting the agent, as *lover*, or the action, as *loving*. These endings, however, in old English, were not unfrequently accented.

And knew wel the tavernes in every towne,  
And ev | ery host | eler | : and gay | *tapster* | *e*,  
Bet than | a la | zer : or | a *beg | gester* | *e*.  
*Chau. Prol. 240.*

For ther was he nat like a cloisterere,  
With thred | bare cope | : as is | a poor | *scholer* | *e*,  
But he was like a maister or a pope. *Chau. Prol. 261.*

———— The mount of Citheron,  
Ther Ve | nus hath | : hire prin | cipal | *dwelling* |,  
Was shew | ed on | the wall | : in *pur | treying* |.  
*Chau. C. T. 1938.*

A! fredome is a noble thing,  
Fre|dome mayes man|: to haiff | *liking* |. *Bruce*, 1. 225.

For na|ture hath | not ta|ken : his *be|ginning* |  
Of no partie, ne cantel of a thing.  
*Chau. Knightes Tale*; *C. T.* 3009.

To the same rule may be referred the adjectives of comparison; and such adjectives as are formed by adding the common terminations to a substantive, though Barbour has sometimes accented the last syllable of the adjective in *y*.

And gyff that ony man thaim by  
Had on|y thing|: that wes | *worthy* |.  
*Bruce*, 1. 205.

And wyas | men say|is : he is | *happy* |  
That be othir will him chasty. *Bruce*, 1. 121.

The same rule and the same exception hold in respect to adverbs derived from adjectives.

For oft feynying of rybbaldy <sup>1</sup>  
Await|yeit him|: and that | *gretly* |.  
*Bruce*, 1. 341.

Ik hard never, in sang na ryme,  
Tell | off a man|: that swa | *smertly* |  
Eschewyt swa gret chewalry. *Bruce*, 3. 178.

The next law governs the accentuation of such compounds, as consist of a substantive and some word that qualifies it; whether it be an adjective, or a substantive, preposition, or other word used adjectively. This law is the reverse of that, which regulates the accents of a sentence. The latter requires the substantive to be accented, but in the compound the accent falls upon the adjective; we should say for instance—all | *black birds* | are not *black|birds*. From the 14th to the 16th century this rule was frequently, and is still occasionally, violated. The only exception, however, which has *fixed* itself in the language, is the word *mankind*. Milton accented it sometimes on the first, and at other times on the second syllable, but the

<sup>1</sup> Compare *continually*, *certainly*, as pronounced in Norfolk; see Forby's "Glossary," p. 105.



latter now always takes the accent. The accent was most frequently transposed in those words which ended with a long syllable, especially if it contained the long *i*, as *insight*, *moonlight*, *sun-rise*. When the last syllable contained a short vowel sound, the accent was occasionally, but rarely, misplaced. In such cases, the false accentuation is now particularly offensive.

The drooping night thus creepeth on them fast,  
And | the sad hu | mour : load | ing their | *eyelids* |,  
As messenger of Morpheus, on them cast  
Sweet slumb'ring dew, the which to sleep them bids.

*F. Q. 1. 1. 36.*

Treble augmented was his furious mood  
With bitter sense of his deep-rooted ill,  
That flames | of fire | he threw | forth : from | his large | *nostril* |.  
*F. Q. 1. 11. 22.*

As for | the thrice | three-an | gled : beech | *nut-shell* |,  
Or ches | nut's arm | ed husk | : and hid | *kernel* |.

*Hall. Sat. 3. 1. 18.*

Hire mouth ful smale and therto soft and red,  
But sik | erly | : she had | a fayr | *foreked* |. *Chau. Prol. 153.*

The compounds ending in *dom*, *hood*, *ship*, *ness*, *ess*, also belong to the same rule. Most of these endings contained two syllables in our old English dialect, and often took the verbal accent.

The angyr, na the wrechet dome,  
That | is cowp | lyt : to foule | *thyridome* |.<sup>1</sup>

*The Bruce, 1. 235.*

Ful soth | is sayd | : that lov | e ne | *lordship* |  
Wol nat, his thankes, have no felawship.

*Chau. The Knightes Tale ; C. T. 1625.*

That | is to sayn | : trouth, hon | our, and | *manhe* | *de*,  
Wisdom, humblesse, estat, and high kinrede.

*Chau. The Knightes Tale ; C. T. 2791.*

——— Throw his douchti deid,  
And throw | his owt | rageous | *manheid* |. *Bruce, 3. 161.*

Joy | e after wo | : and wo | af | ter *gladnes* | *se*  
And shew | ed him | ensam | ple : and | *likenes* | *se*.

*Chau. C. T. 2843.*

<sup>1</sup> Barbour also accents this word on the first syllable ; 1. 269.

I not | whe'r she |: be wom | an or | goddes | se,  
But Venus is it sothly, as I gesse.

Chau. *The Knightes Tale*; C. T. 1103.

Another class of compounds consist of a noun, and a preposition, that governs and, as it were, overrides it; the substantive *underground*, and adjective *underhand*, may afford us examples; they differ widely in their character from such compounds as *undergrowth* and *undershot*. If we call the latter adjectival compounds, the others may be termed the prepositional. There can be little doubt that, at one period, the preposition only preceded and governed a substantive, but the analogy was soon extended to adjectives and even verbs.

The rules, which regulate the accentuation of these compounds, are very irregular. The tendency of our language has been, of late years, to throw the accent on the noun, or word governed by the preposition; though I suspect the latter generally received it, in our earlier and purer dialects.

The prefix *un*, at present, is never accented by correct speakers; but in the old English we find it far more generally accented than the following syllable. Shakespeare and Milton almost always accent *uncouth* on the first syllable, and we find its vulgar representative *uncut*, accented in like manner; while the modern *uncouth* accents the second syllable. Many other instances might be brought, to show the difference between the old and the modern pronunciation of these compounds.

The prefix *mis* was, in all probability, at first a preposition. In modern usage it is very seldom accented, but in our old writers frequently.

——— That folk,  
Throw thar | gret *mis* | chance : and | foly |,  
War tretyt than sa wykkytly,  
That thar fays thar jugis war.

Bruce, l 221.

But who conjur'd—

—— Rablais' drunken revellings,  
To grace | the *mis* | rule : of | our tav | ernes | ?

Hall. Sat. 2. 1. (near the end).

Verbs, compounded of a verb and preposition, accent the former ; but in our older writers we find the rule often violated.

The *for* | *lorn* maid | : did | with loves long | ing burn |.

*F. Q. 1. 6. 22.*

Speak, Cap | tain, shall | I stab | : the *for* | *lorn* swain | ?

*2 H. VI. 4. 1. 65.*

If either salves, or oils, or herbs, or charms,

A *for* | *done* wight | : from door | of death | mote raise |.

*F. Q. 1. 5. 41.*

— Perdition

Take me for ever, if in my fell anger

I do | not *out* | *do* : all | exam | ple ; where |

Where are these ladies ?

*Fletcher. Bonduca, 3. 5.*

With plum | ed helm | : thy slay | er *be* | gins threats |.

*Lear, 4. 2. 57.*

— His obedience

Impu | ted *be* | comes theirs | : by faith | ; his mer | its

To save them, not their own, though legal, works.

*P. L. 12. 408.*

We | do approve | thy cen | sure : *be* | loved Cri | tes.

*B. Jons. Cynthia's Revels, 5. 3.*

Certain prepositions are compounded of a preposition and some other word which is governed by it. The verbal accent now always falls upon the latter, but in our older writers it often fell upon the preposition.

A viscount's daughter, an earl's heir,

*Be* | sides what | : her vir | tues fair |

Added to her noble birth.

*Milton, Epitaph, &c.*

Sweet | is the coun | try : *be* | cause | full of rich | es.

*2 H. VI. 4. 7. 66.*

— These declare

Thy good | ness *be* | yond thought | : and pow'r | divine |.

*P. L. 5. 158.*

That make | no diff' | rence : *be* | twixt cer | tain dy | ing

And dying well.

*Fletcher. Bonduca, 2. 1.*

— And saw the shape

Still glor | ious, *be* | fore whom | : awake | I stood |.

*P. L. 8. 463.*

— We are strong enough,

If | not too man | y : *be* | hind yon | der hill |,

The fellow tells me, she attends, weak-guarded.

*Fl. Bonduca, 3. 4.*

Where val|iant Tal|bot : a|bove hu|man thought|  
 Enacted wonders. 1 *H. VI.* 1. 1. 121.

And ev|er a|gainst : eat|ing cares|  
 Lap me in soft Lydian airs. *L'Allegro*, 135.

— Nor walk by noon,  
 Or glitt|'ring star|light : with|out thee | is sweet|. *P. L.* 4. 655.

— The place unknown and wild  
 Breeds dread|ful doubts| : oft fire | is with|out smoke|,  
 And pe|ril with|out show|. *F. Q.* 1. 1. 12.

— To answer thy desire  
 Of know|ledge with|in bounds| : beyond | abstain|  
 To ask— *P. L.* 7. 119.

Adverbs which are formed by adding a preposition to the words *where* and *there*, as *wherein*, *whereby*, &c., *therein*, *thereby*, *thereof*, &c., were often accented on the first syllable by Spenser, Shakespeare, and Milton; but now take the accent on the last.

Tha adverbs compounded with *all*, as *always*, *also*, &c., now take the accent on the first syllable, but were often accented by our old poets on the second.

It should be mentioned before we close the chapter, that many words which accent the first syllable, when used as substantives, accent the last, when used as verbs, as *fore|cast*, *up|start*, *o|verthrow*, &c., to *fore|cast*, to *up|start*, to *over|throw*, &c.

## CHAPTER V.

## QUANTITY.

It has been much disputed, if there be such a thing as quantity in the English language; and more learning has been shown in the discussion, than either good sense or good temper. In matters of this kind, many a difficulty will give way before a clear definition. We will therefore first endeavour to *fix* the meaning of the word.

The Greeks and Latins distinguished between the actual and the metrical quantity of a syllable. As far as regarded the purposes of metre, all their syllables were divided into two great classes, the long and the short. But when they looked to the actual quantity, they felt no difficulty in making nicer distinctions; in holding for example the first syllable of *in-clytus* shorter than the first of *in-felix*, the first syllable of *es-sem* from *sum*, shorter than the first syllable of *es-sem* from *edo*. In all these cases the first syllables were metrically long; but in one set of cases the vowel was long, in the other it was short.

Now whether our metre depend upon quantity or not, we clearly have no metrical distribution of syllables; and therefore can have no metrical quantity, in the sense in which these words have just been used. But the notion that is generally attached to the word quantity, is that which is connected with its metrical value. In this sense, therefore, it may fairly be said, that we have no quantity in the English language.

On the other hand, nobody will deny that in English, as in every other language, there are some syllables which are longer, that is, which usually require a longer time for pronunciation, than others. Every addition of a consonant must, of necessity, lengthen the syllable; whether the consonant be added at the beginning of the word, as in the examples *ass*, *lass*, *glass*, or at the end, as in *ask*, *asks*, *ask'et*.

In both cases the last syllable is longer than the second, and the second than the first; or,—if we choose so to express it—the latter syllables have each of them a longer quantity than the one preceding.

Before we examine the connexion between quantity *thus defined*, and our English rhythms, it will be useful, if not necessary, to make a few remarks upon the quantities of our English vowels; for though, strictly speaking, we have neither long nor short syllables, we have most certainly both long and short vowels.

#### ORTHOGRAPHY OF THE VOWELS.

In all languages, custom must decide what increase of quantity shall constitute a distinct letter. Most languages range their vowels, as respects time, under two heads, the long vowels and the short; but others, as some of the Irish dialects, range them under three, the long, the middle, and the short vowels.<sup>1</sup> There are reasons for believing, that this division prevailed, at least partially, in the Anglo-Saxon.

The long quantity was marked by Anglo-Saxon writers in two ways; either by placing over the vowel our present acute accent, as in *gód* good, *fúl* foul, which were thus distinguished from *God* God, and *ful* full; or by actually doubling the vowel, thus, *gód* was sometimes written *good*. This latter mode of distinguishing the long quantity still remains, and even of the former some traces were left as late as the sixteenth century. Several writers, in Elizabeth's reign, expressed the sound of the long *e* by *ée*, and wrote *wée* and *fée* for our modern *we* and *feet*.

When the vowel had no such accent, and was followed by not more than a single consonant, it seems, in the Anglo-Saxon period, to have represented its ordinary or middle time; when it was followed by a double consonant, or its equivalent,<sup>2</sup> it must have indicated its shortest time; when

<sup>1</sup> *Plata*, or the continuous sound given to the Sanskrit vowels, is three times the length of the short vowel, and should occupy three moments in its utterance.

<sup>2</sup> By the word *equivalent*, I mean any combination of letters, which serves as a substitute for a duplicated letter. Both in Anglo-Saxon and in modern

followed by two different consonants, it was probably a matter of doubt, which of the two, the ordinary or the short time, was meant to be expressed. My reasons for believing that a double consonant was meant to indicate a short vowel, are the following.

It has been a notion very widely entertained, that accent lengthens the quantity of a syllable; and to a certain extent, this notion may be well founded. We cannot accent the first syllable of *bedight*, without lengthening its vowel, or adding to it the following consonant *bed | ight*. If we wish to keep the short *e*, and also to preserve the last syllable entire, we must dwell on the *d*, or in effect double that consonant, and pronounce the word *bed | dight*. This, I take it, was the origin of the double consonant. Hence, I believe, came that important rule, one of the first established, and the longest retained in our orthography, which orders us to double the final consonant of an accented syllable, when the vowel is a short one.

This rule, though for the most part well understood, and well observed by Anglo-Saxon writers, gave rise to a mode of spelling, which has worked sad confusion in our English orthography. As the short vowel of an accented syllable doubled the final consonant, it came at length to be an established rule, that a double consonant always denoted a short vowel. Hence, in the eleventh and twelfth centuries,<sup>1</sup> we find the consonant frequently doubled, even in unaccented syllables; and so firmly was the system established in the beginning of the thirteenth, that we have a long poem, called the *Ormulum*, in which the consonant is always doubled, whenever it follows a short vowel; *iss* and *itt* being written

This peculiar mode of spelling has been ascribed, by some to the ignorance of the writer, by others to the rudeness of a provincial dialect, by a third party to the harsh and rugged pronunciation of an East-English Dane! Whatever

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English, there seems to have been an aversion to the doubling of certain consonants. In modern orthography, we represent a double *k* by *ck*, a double *g* or *ch* by *dg* or *tch*.

<sup>1</sup> There are a few instances of such spelling in Anglo-Saxon MSS.

we may say to the charge of rudeness, that of ignorance must rest with the critic. The author adopted his system designedly, and warns his transcriber not to violate it. Though inconvenient, it is at least consistent; in this particular, indeed, superior to any of those which have succeeded it.

To the same principle may be traced the vicious spelling, that is found in many English words, and particularly in our monosyllables; for example, in *sea-gull*, *set-off*, *bliss*, *dull*, *buff*, &c. It is rather singular, that though we write *full* with two *l*'s, yet with something like an appreciation of the old rule, which limits the duplication to an accented syllable, we get rid of the superfluous *l* when the word is compounded, and write *hopeful*, *sinful*, &c.

The law, we have just been examining, gave rise to a second, which has had, if possible, a still greater influence in deranging the orthography of our language. As the doubling of the consonant indicated a short vowel, so by the converse rule a single consonant must have indicated a long one; and the vowels must have been long in the following dissyllables, *none* the moon, *time* time, *name* a name. Now in the Anglo-Saxon there was a great number of words, which had, as it were, two forms; one ending in a consonant, the other in a vowel. In the time of Chaucer, all the different vowel-endings were represented by the *e* final, and so great is the number of words which this writer uses, sometimes as monosyllables, and sometimes as dissyllables with the addition of the *e*, that he has been accused of adding to the number of his syllables, whenever it suited the convenience of his rhythm. In his works we find *hert* and *herte*, *bed* and *bedde*, *erth* and *erthe*, &c. In the Anglo-Saxon we find corresponding duplicates, the additional syllable giving to the noun, in almost every case a new declension, and in most a new gender. In some few cases, the final *e* had become mute, even before the time of Chaucer; and was wholly lost in the period which elapsed between his death and the accession of the Tudors. Still, however, it held its ground in our manuscripts, and *ure* our, *rose* a rose, &c., though pronounced as monosyllables, were still written according to the old



spelling. Hence it came gradually to be considered as a rule, that when a syllable ended in a single consonant and mute *e*, the vowel was long.

Such is clearly the origin of this very peculiar mode of indicating the long vowel; and it seems to me so obvious, that I always felt surprise at the many and various opinions that have been hazarded upon the subject. We could not expect much information from men, who, like Tyrwhitt, were avowedly ignorant of the early state of our language; but even Hick[*e*]*s* had his doubts, whether the final *e* of Anglo-Saxon words were mute or vocal; and Rask, notwithstanding his triumph over that far superior scholar, has fallen into this, his greatest blunder. Price, whose good sense does not often fail him, supposes this mode of spelling to be the work of the Norman, and the same as the "orthography that marked the long syllables of his native tongue."<sup>1</sup> As if the *e* final were mute in Norman French!

One of the results, which followed the establishment of this second principle, was the saving of many of our monosyllables from the duplication of the final consonant. If the presence of the mute *e* indicate a long vowel, by the converse rule its absence must indicate a short one. If the vowel be long in *white*, *pate*, and *rote*, it must be short in *whit*, *pat*, and *rot*.

It appears, therefore, that there have been no less than four systems employed at different periods, to mark the quantity of our English vowels. In the first, the long time was marked by the acute accent; in the second, by a doubling of the vowel; in the fourth, by the mute *e*; while the third system indicated the short time by a doubling of the consonant, and conversely, the long time by a single consonant. In modern practice, the three last systems are, to a certain degree, combined. It would be matter of rather curious inquiry, to trace the several classes of syllables which are subject to their respective laws; and the gradual steps by which the later systems have intruded on the older ones.

These observations may show, how inapplicable to our

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<sup>1</sup> Warton's "History of English Poetry," Diss. 1, note p. cii.

tongue are the laws, which regulate the quantity of the Greek and Latin. Our earlier critics—a Sydney or a Spenser—talked as familiarly of vowels long by position, as though they were still scanning their hexameters and pentameters; and would have upholden the first syllable of *killy* as long, despite the evidence of their own senses. The same principles have been acquiesced in, though not openly avowed, by later writers; and Mitford has even given us directions to distinguish a long syllable from a short one. His system is a mere application of Latin rules to English pronunciation, without regard to the spelling. So far it is an improvement upon that of his predecessors; but it is forgotten that the laws of Greek and Latin quantity were for the most part conventional, and derived their authority from usage. Custom with us has laid down no rules upon the subject, and without her sanction all rules are valueless.

We have hitherto denominated certain vowels long and short, as though we considered the only difference between them to be their time; as though, for instance, the vowel in *meet* differed from that in *met* only in its being longer. The truth is, they are of widely different quality. The spelling of many words has remained unchanged, for a period, during which we have the strongest evidence of a great change in our pronunciation. When the orthography of the words *meet* and *met* was settled, the vowels in all probability differed only in respect of time; but they have now been changing for some centuries, till they have nothing in common between them, but a similarity in their spelling.

In the present state of our language, we have five vowel sounds, each of which furnishes us with two vowels. Though the vowels, thus related to each other, differ only in respect of time, the spelling but rarely shows us any connexion between them.

*Short Vowels.*

Fathom.  
Merry.  
Pill.  
Poll.  
Pull.

*Long Vowels.*

Father.  
Mary.  
Peel.  
Pull.  
Pool.

The vowels *o* and *u*, as they occur in *note* and *nut*,<sup>1</sup> stand alone, as do also the different diphthongs.

#### QUANTITY AS AN INDEX OF ENGLISH RHYTHM.

It has been said that our English rhythms are governed by accent; I, moreover, believe this to be the *sole* principle that regulates them. Most of our modern writers on Versification are of a different opinion. I have seen the title of a book<sup>2</sup> which professed to give examples of verse measured *solely* by the quantity, but have been unable to procure it. Mitford, too, after dwelling on the great importance of accent, seems half to mistrust the conclusions he has come to; for he adds, strangely enough, and not very intelligibly, "variety is allowed for the quantities of syllables, too freely to be exactly limited by rule. A certain balance of quantities, however, throughout the verse, is required, so that deficiency be no where striking. Long syllables, therefore, must predominate." I do not feel the force of this inference, and much less do I acknowledge it, as one of the essentials of our "heroic verse." Verses may be found in every poet that has written our language, which have neither a balance of quantities, nor a predominance of long syllables; and it asks but little stretch of imagination to suppose a case, in which the predominance of short quantities, so far from being a defect, might be a beauty.

One of our leading reviews has stated, that, "independent of accent, quantity neither is nor ought to be neglected

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<sup>1</sup> In ordinary speech, I believe the words *burn*, *curb*, *hurt*, *lurk*, &c., differ from *bun*, *cub*, *hul*, *luck*, &c., only in the greater length of the vowel-sound. If this be so, then, instead of five, there are six vowel-sounds in our language, each of which furnishes us with two vowels, accordingly as the quantity is long or short. Again; I would say that *farther* differs from *father* only in the greater length of its first vowel. If so, there is one vowel-sound in our language which furnishes us with *three* vowels. These are found respectively in the words *fathom*, *father*, *farther*. There are some languages which thus form three vowels from almost every one of their vowel-sounds. See p. 103.

<sup>2</sup> Verse measured with a regard solely to the length of time required in the pronunciation of syllables, the accent and emphasis being entirely unnoticed. Richard Edwards. 1813. 12mo.

in our versification." In this, if I understand it rightly, I agree. The time is, occasionally, of great importance to the beauty of a verse, but never an index of its rhythm. I suspect, however, that the reviewer looked upon quantity in a more important light. He gives us the following stave, in which the "long syllables" are arranged as they would be in a Latin sapphic, with an accentual rhythm, such as is often met with in our dramatic poets. The object is to show, that such "coincidence of temporal metre" gives a peculiar character to the verse, notwithstanding the familiar arrangement of the accents.

O liquid strēamlēts to the māin rētūrning,  
Mūrmuring wātērs that adōwn the mōuntains  
Rūsh unōbstrūctēd, never in the ōcean  
Hōpe to be trānquil.

The following stave is then given with the same accentuation, and the same pauses, to show how "a difference of quantities will destroy the resemblance to Latin sapphic."

The hēadlōng tōrrēt from its nātive caverns  
Būrsting resistlēss, with dēstrūctive fury  
Rōars through the valley, wāsting with its deluge  
Forēsts ānd hāmlets.

I cannot help thinking, that the reviewer has deceived himself. I do not believe one man in a hundred would be sensible of the artful collocation of the long syllables in the first stave. True it is, that in both these staves, the verse has a peculiar character; but one, I think, quite independent of the quantity. The sameness of the rhythm would alone be sufficient for this purpose. There is no doubt also a great difference in the flow of the two stanzas, but this too, I think, is in a very slight degree owing to the difference in their quantities. The first stave is made up of easy and flowing syllables, while the latter is clogged throughout with knots of the most rugged and unyielding consonants. The mere difficulty of pronunciation might account for that difference of flow, which the reviewer attributes solely to the difference of the quantities.

It is not, however, denied, that the effect may be partly

owing to the change in the quantity. There is no doubt that such a change will sometimes force itself upon our notice in a very striking manner. In the staves that follow, any jostling of consonants has been studiously avoided ;

The busy rivulet in humble valley  
Slippeth away in happiness ; it ever  
Hurrieth on, a solitude around, but  
Heaven above it

The lonely tårn that sleēps upōn the mōuntain,  
Brēathing a hōly cālm arōund, drinks ever  
Of the grēat presēnce, ēven in its slūmber  
Dēeply rejōicing :

The striking difference in the flow of these two stanzas<sup>1</sup> is almost entirely owing to the difference of their quantities.

Before we close this section, I would make an observation on a passage in the review last quoted, which, though it relate to a foreign language, has an indirect bearing on the question now before us. The law of French verse, as regards quantity, is stated to be—the thirteenth syllable short, the sixth long. Now a French verse can never take a thirteenth syllable, unless it consist of the short vowel sound, which is usually indicated by the *e* final ; and as this is the shortest syllable in the French language, the critic risked little, in laying down the first part of his canon. The latter part, I think, is not correct. A strong accent indeed falls on the sixth syllable, but every page of French poetry contains syllables so situated, which cannot, with any show of reason, be classed among the long syllables of the language.

This notice may be useful as showing that, as regards the French, no less than our own tongue, the rhythms that depend on accent are independent of quantity. I believe the same remark might be extended to every living language from India westward.

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<sup>1</sup> These stanzas have not the same rhythm [as was here stated in the first edition] as the stanzas quoted on p. 109. I shall not, however, trouble the reader with a second version. The reasoning, though weakened, is still strong enough to bear the inference it was meant to support.

## QUANTITY AS AN EMBELLISHMENT OF RHYTHM.

Our great poets certainly have not paid the same attention to the quantity of their syllables, as to the quality of their letter-sounds. Shakespeare, however, seems to have affected the short vowels, and particularly the short *i*, when he had to describe any quickness of motion.

Therefore do nimble-pinion'd doves draw love,  
And, therefore, hath the wind-swift Cupid wings.

*R. & J. 2. 5. 7.*

——— The nimble gunner  
With linstock now the dev'lish cannon touches—

*H. V. 3, Chorus. 32.*

Milton also sometimes aided his rhythm by a like attention to his quantities ;

——— And soon  
In order, *quit of all impediment*,  
Instant, without disturb they took alarm. *P. L. 6. 547.*

In the following verses long syllables predominate.

A poor, infirm, weak and despised old man.  
*Lear, 3. 2. 20.*

Unwieldy, slow, heavy and pale as lead.  
*R. & Jul. 2. 5. 17.*

The lowing herds wind slowly o'er the lea.  
*Gray, Elegy, st. 1.*

Through glades and glooms the mingled measure stole,  
Or o'er some haunted streams with fond delay  
Round a holy calm diffusing,  
Love of peace, and lonely musing,  
In hollow murmurs died away.  
*Collins, The Passions.*

Or where Mæander's amber waves  
In ling'ring lab'rins ths creep.  
*Gray, Progress of Poesy, 2. 3.*

Lo ! where Mæotis sleeps, and hardly flows  
The freezing Tanais through a waste of snows.  
*Pope, Dunc. 3. 87.*

The last example is said to have been Pope's favourite couplet; but his reasons for the preference are by no means obvious. The voice, to be sure, lingers with the river; but why so many sibilants?

## CHAPTER VI.

## RIME,

is the correspondence, which exists between syllables, containing sounds similarly modified.

When the same modification of sound recurs at definite intervals, the coincidence very readily strikes the ear; and when it is found in accented syllables, such syllables fix the attention more strongly, than if they merely received the accent. Hence we may perceive the importance of rime in accentual verse. It is not, as is sometimes asserted, a mere ornament; it marks and defines the accent, and thereby strengthens and supports the rhythm. Its advantages have been felt so strongly, that no people have ever adopted an accentual rhythm, without also adopting rime.

Every accented syllable contains a vowel; hence a riming syllable may be divided into three parts—the initial consonants, or those which precede the vowel, the vowel itself, and lastly the final consonants. Rime will be considered as made up of different kinds, accordingly as one or more of these elements correspond.

The first species is the *perfect* rime, or that which requires a correspondence in all the three. It is called by the French the rich rime, and by that people is not only tolerated but sought after. With us it has been very generally discountenanced.

The second kind is *alliteration*, or that in which only the initial sounds correspond. It pervades all our earlier poetry, and long held control over our English rhythms. We do not, however, stop here to discuss its properties; we shall content ourselves merely with one observation. Rask tells us, that when the riming syllables of an Anglo-Saxon verse began with vowels, such vowels were, if possible, different.





This rule, which was first laid down by Olaus Wormius, appears to be a sound one. It seems to me a simple deduction from one more general. The alliterative syllables of an Anglo-Saxon verse rimed, I believe, only with the initial consonants. In very few instances have I found the vowels corresponding. When the initial consonants were wanting, the law of alliteration was looked upon as satisfied, and the vowels, now become the initial letters, were found to be different.

The third and fourth kinds of rime are the *vowel* and *consonantal*. The former, which required only a correspondence in the vowels, was once common among the Irish; but has never been adopted into English verse.<sup>1</sup> The latter rimed only with the consonants. It was well known to our ancestors and the kindred races of the north: Olaus Wormius exemplifies it in the following quotation from Cicero: "non docti sed facti." When both the final and the initial consonants correspond, it may be called, for distinction's sake, the *full consonantal rime*.

In the fifth kind of rime, the vowels correspond and also the initial consonants; in the sixth, the vowels and final consonants. The former has been generally confounded with alliteration. It was principally affected by those poets, who wrote after the subversion of our regular alliterative rhythms, and may perhaps be conveniently designated as *modern alliteration*. The latter is our *common rime*, of which we have too much to say elsewhere, to dwell upon it here.

We have hitherto assumed the rime to be confined to a single accented syllable. Sometimes, however, it reaches to

<sup>1</sup> The vowel-rime, or, as it is termed by French and Spanish critics, the *assonant* rime, was common in the Romance of Oc and all the kindred Spanish dialects, and is found in *one* (I believe only *one*) of our Anglo-Norman poems. It is clearly the Irish *comhardadh*, though not subject, in the Romance dialects, to the nice rules which regulate its assonances in the Gaelic. I believe there is another peculiarity of modern versification which may be traced to the sister dialect, for I have little doubt that *some* species of the bob (see bk. iv. c. iv.) represent the Welsh *cyrobb*. These correspondences between the original and derivative tongues are valuable, and should, in all cases, be carefully investigated.

the following syllable, and occasionally to the two following syllables. In such case the supernumerary syllable or syllables must be unaccented. The rime, when thus extended, takes the names of *double* and *triple* rime.

It has ever been a rule in our prosody, that, when the rime becomes double or triple, the unaccented syllables must rime *perfectly*. King James, in his "*Reulis and Cautelis*," warns you "quhen there fallis any short syllabis after the lang syllabe in the line, that ze repeat thame in the lyne quhilk rymis to the uthir, even as ze set them downe in the first lyne, as for exempyll ze man not say

Then feir nocht  
Nor heir ocht,

bot

Then feir nocht  
Nor heir nocht,

repeating the same *nocht* in baith lynis; because this syllabe *nocht*, nather serving for cullour nor fute, is bot a tayle to the lang fute preceding." The "*Reule*" is better than the reason. It is but too often violated. Even Chancer, for the most part so careful in his rimes, has sometimes broken it.<sup>1</sup> In his roguish apology for the indiscreet disclosures of his Sompnour, he tells us,

Of cursing ought eche guilty man him drede,  
For curse wol sle right as assoiling saveth,  
And al|so war|e him : of | a signif|ica|vit.<sup>2</sup>

*Prologue*, 662.

Clare, the Northamptonshire poet, whose poems in

<sup>1</sup> The *perfect* correspondence in the unaccented syllables of the double rime was sometimes dispens'd with. The authors of the *Alisaunder*, of *Havelok*, and of other romances written in the 13th century, occasionally contented themselves with a rime between the last accented syllables, and wholly neglected what King James calls "the tail." This must have been a recognised and legitimate kind of rime, for the dumbest ear would have been offended, if such correspondences as *tent* and *deontis*, *carpath* and *harpe*, were palmed upon it as regular double rimes.

<sup>2</sup> A writ issuing out of Chancery to enforce obedience to the Ecclesiastical Courts.

general show great facility, has tried his hand at the triple rime;

Then come | ere a *min*|ute's gone,  
 For the long summer's day  
 Puts her wings | swift as *lin*|nets on  
 For hieing away;  
 Then come | with no *doubt*|ings near  
 To fear a false love,  
 For there's noth|ing without | *thee*, dear,  
 Can please in Broomsgrove, &c.

But one of the commonest and most offensive blunders is the misplacing of the accent, as in the following couplet of Swift,

But as | to com|ic A|ristoph|anes  
 The rogue | too vic|ious and too | *prophane* | is.

Another, almost as offensive, and perhaps more common, is the ending one of the rimes with an accented syllable.

Proceed | to Trag|ics: first | Eurip|ides  
 (An au|thor where | : I some|times *dip* | *adays*.)  
 Is right|ly cen|sured: by | the *Stag*|yrite,  
 Who says | his num|bers: do | not *fadge* | *aright*.

The last syllables of the adverbs ought to be accented, *adays* |, *aright* |. If the reader wish for more examples of the triple rime, he may consult Swift's letter to Sheridan [1718], from which I have quoted. Out of more than a dozen couplets he may find two or three riming decently.

#### FINAL RIME,

or that which occurs at the end of a verse, is now almost the only one recognized in our language. It is, however, in all probability, foreign in its origin, and made its way amongst us slowly and with difficulty. As this opinion has been controverted, I will lay the reasons, which led me to adopt it, briefly before the reader.

In the first place, I know of no poem, written in a Gothic dialect with final rime, before Otfrid's *Evangelij*. This was written in Frankish, about the year 870. The riming Anglo-Saxon poem, which Conybeare discovered in

the Exeter MS. can hardly be older than the close of the tenth century; and though other poems contain riming passages, I doubt if any of them existed before the ninth. Now we have many riming Latin poems written by Englishmen, some as early as the seventh century. This seems to show, that the use of final rime was familiar to the scholar, before it was adopted into the vernacular language. It may be asked, whence the Latinist got his rime, unless from the Gothic conquerors of the empire, as the Romans were confessedly ignorant of it. I would answer, in all probability from the Celtic races; who appear to have retained no small portion of their language, even amid all the degradation of Roman and Gothic servitude. The earliest poems of the Irish have final rime, and we know that the Welsh used it, at least as early as the sixth century. Some of the Welsh poems have a rhythm strongly resembling that of the early Romance poems. Final rime is found in both, and was in all probability derived from one common source.

A second reason, that has led me to this opinion, is the peculiar flow of Anglo-Saxon verse. Final rime has been called a "time-beater;" it separates each verse from the others by a strongly-marked boundary, and has ever a tendency to make the sense accommodate itself to these artificial pauses. We find this to be the case even in those alliterative poems, which were written after final rime had been introduced among us. The verse generally ends with the line, as if the new rhythm had completely overspread the language. But in the *Anglo-Saxon* rhythms, we find the sense running from line to line, and even preferring a pause in the midst of a verse. I incline therefore to think, though the subject is confessedly one of difficulty, that final rime first originated with the Celtic races, that it was early transferred to the Latin, and from thence came gradually into our own language.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The fact of there having been *two* kinds of final rime in the Celtic, both of which are found in the Romance dialects that arose out of its ruins, and only *one* of which was ever adopted in the Latin "rhythmus," is a strong argument

The only final rime, that has been tolerated in our language, is of the sixth kind, or that which requires a correspondence both in the vowels and final consonants. This law is not always observed in those specimens of final rime, which have come to us from the Anglo-Saxons. We do not always find the vowel-sounds identical, nor the final consonants always corresponding. But when we remember that these verses have never more than three accents, that they are subject to the law of alliteration, and sometimes also contain internal rime, that the riming syllables, moreover, are sometimes as many as eight or nine in number, we may see reason rather to admire the skill of the poet, than to blame his negligence. When, however, the verse was lengthened and alliteration banished, we had a fair right to expect greater caution, and very rarely indeed does Chaucer disappoint us. His rimes are, for the most part, strictly correct. The writers who succeeded him seem to have been misled by the spirit of imitation. Many syllables, which rimed in the days of Chaucer and Gower, had no longer a sufficient correspondence, owing to change of pronunciation. Still, however, they were held to be legitimate rimes upon the authority of these poets. Hence arose a vast and increasing number of *conventional* rimes, which have since continued to disfigure our poetry. Pope used them with such profusion, that even Swift remonstrated with him on his carelessness.

Another source of these conventional rimes was the number of dialects, which prevailed during the 15th and 16th centuries. Some of the Elizabethan writers honestly confined themselves to one dialect, and wrote the same language that they spoke. Others, and among them some of our greatest, allowed themselves a wider license, and, when hard-pushed for a rime, scrupled not at taking it from any dialect which could furnish it. Spenser sinned grievously in this respect, and grievously has he answered

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in favour of the view here taken as to the Celtic origin of final rime. It must, however, be confessed, that one of my arguments here used is somewhat strained. The influence which final rime exerted over our English rhythms, is over-rated.

for it. He has been accused of altering his spelling to help his rime! The charge is silly enough, and to a sensible man carries its own refutation with it. In a large proportion of these cases, the word supposed to have been a mere corruption, is found to be still flourishing in our country dialects. His real offence, however, was a serious one. It introduced a *vagueness* into our pronunciation, under which the language is still suffering.

The following passage from Puttenham<sup>1</sup> may help to make this matter clearer. "There cannot be in a maker a fowler fault then to falsifie his accent to serve his cadence, or by untrue orthographie to wrench his words to helpe his rime, for it is a signe that such a maker is not copious in his owne language, or (as they are wont to say) not halfe his crafts maister; as for example, if one should rime to this word *restore*, he may not match him with *doore* or *poore*, for neither of both are of like terminant, either by good orthography or by naturall sound, therfore such rime is strained; so is it to this word *ram*, to say *came*, or to *beane*, *den*, for they sound not nor be written alike, and many other like cadences, which were superfluous to recite, and are usual with rude rimers, who observe not precisely the rules of prosodie. Neverthesse in all such cases, if necessitie constrained, it is somewhat more tollerable to help the rime by false orthographie, then to leave an unplesant dissonance to the eare, by keeping trewe orthographie and loosing the rime; as, for example, it is better to rime *dore* with *restore*, then in his truer orthographie, which is *doore*, &c."

Notwithstanding some inconsistency of expression, the critic's meaning is, on the whole, tolerably clear. He prefers a spelling and a pronunciation, different from those generally used, to a false rime. He would have *doore* spelt and pronounced *dore*, though such spelling and pronunciation were vulgar and unfashionable, whenever it was made to rime with *restore*. It is singular that the provincial pronunciation has now got the upper hand; although we still spell the word *door*, we pronounce it *dore*.

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[<sup>1</sup> The Arte of English Poesie; bk. ii. ch. 8(9).—W. W. S.]

While upon this subject, it may be observed, that *s* and *th* are used in our language, to represent both a whisper and a vocal sound ; and these sounds often rime conventionally. Such rime may fully satisfy the eye, but it is most offensive to the ear.

In the fat age of pleasure, wealth, and *ease*,  
Sprung the rank weed, and thrived with large *increase*.

Pope. *Essay on Criticism*, 534.

Soft o'er the shrouds aërial whispers *breathe*,  
That seem'd but zephyrs to the train *beneath*.

Pope. *Rape of the Lock*, 2. 57.

✓ The riming syllables, we have seen, must have a correspondence between the vowels and the final consonants ; but here the correspondence ceases ; no *perfect* rime can be allowed. Puttenham warns his reader against riming such words as *constraine* and *restraine*, or *aspire* and *respire* ; “ which rule, nevertheless, is not well observed by many makers for lacke of good judgment and a delicate ear.” It was sometimes violated by Chaucer, and frequently by Pope. The blunders of no writer, however eminent, should weigh with us as authority. The perfect rime always sounds strangely to the ear, and in some cases most offensively so.

The final rime may be single, double, or triple. In the riming Anglo-Saxon poem, above alluded to, we have all the three. Chaucer seems to have preferred the double rime ; the letter *e*, or some one of its combinations, forming, for the most part, the unaccented syllable. The poets of Elizabeth's reign had no objection to the double rime ; but it was seldom used by Dryden, and still more rarely by Pope. The latter, in Johnson's opinion, was never happy in his double rimes, excepting once in the *Rape of the Lock*. The following couplet is, no doubt, alluded to ;

The meeting points the sacred hair dis sever  
From the fair head for ever and for ever !

*Rape of the Lock*, 3. 153.

The triple rime is properly an appurtenant to the triple measure. In our common measure it is hardly ever found, and seems opposed to the very nature of the rhythm. There

are instances indeed, in which the triple rime closes our common verse of five accents, but it is then always a professed imitation of a foreign model, the *sdrucchiolo* rime,—as in that stanza of Byron,

Oh | ye immor|tal Gods | : what is | theog|ony ?  
 Oh | thou, too, mor|tal man| : what is | philan|thropy ?  
 Oh! world | which was | and is| : what is | cosmog|ony ?  
 Some peo|ple have | accused | me : of | misan|thropy,  
 And yet | I know | no more| : than | the mahog|any  
 That forms | this desk| : of what | they mean|—lycan|thropy  
 I comprehend, for without transformation  
 Men become wolves on any alight occasion.      *Don Juan*, 9. 20.

The affectation has no other merit than its difficulty.

#### MIDDLE RIME,

or that which exists between the last accented syllables of the two sections, may be considered as the direct offspring of final rime. In the Anglo-Saxon poem already mentioned, each section rimes, and becomes to many purposes a distinct verse. But when the riming syllables were confined to the close of what had been the alliterative couplet, this couplet became the verse, and it was then necessary to distinguish between the middle rime, if any such were introduced, and the regular final rime, which shut in the verse.

This middle rime was most frequently introduced into verse of four accents. In the stanza of *eight* and *six*, as it has been termed, it was very common. In the 16th century it was employed by learned bishops, and on the most sacred subjects; but not with the approbation of Puttenham [bk. ii. ch. 9.]. That critic was of opinion that "rime or concorde is not commendably used both in the end and middle of a verse; unlesse it be in toyes and trifling poesies, for it sheweth a certaine lightnesse either of the matter or of the makers head, albeit these common rimers use it much." The poems of Burns show, that it still keeps its hold upon the people; and Coleridge, who wrote for the few, has used it, and with almost magical effect;



And now there came both mist and snow,  
 And it grew wond'rous cold,  
 And ice | mast-high | : came float | ing by |  
 As green as emerald.

The ice was here, the ice was there,  
 The ice was all around,  
 It crack'd | and growl'd | : and roar'd | and howl'd |,  
 Like noises in a swound. *Ancient Mariner.*

When, as is sometimes the case, the middle rime occurs regularly, it would perhaps be better to divide the line.

#### SECTIONAL RIME,

is that which exists between syllables contained in the same sections. It was well known to all the early dialects. According to Olaus Wormius, the consonantal rime will suffice in the first section; but in the second, there must be a correspondence both between the vowels and the final consonants. The same rule applies to Anglo-Saxon verse.

The origin of this law will, I think, be obvious, when we recollect, that sectional rime was not a substitute for alliteration, but merely an addition to it. Now in the first section, there was always a probability of finding two alliterative syllables,<sup>1</sup> and as a section seldom contained more than three, and generally but two accented syllables, if the *common* sectional rime were added to the alliteration, this could hardly be effected without a *perfect* rime. In some few cases, such has really been the result of this union; but, in general, they avoided it by aiming only at *consonantal* rime. In the second section, where there was generally but one alliterative syllable, a closer correspondence was required.

In tracing the several kinds of sectional rime, it will be convenient to class them according to the different sections in which they occur.

When the section begins with an accent, it will be represented by the figures 1, 2, 3, 4, accordingly as each

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<sup>1</sup> See the section headed *alliteration* in the present chapter.

couple of adjacent accents are separated by *one* unaccented syllable, or the first, the second, or both couples are separated by *two* unaccented syllables.

When the section begins with one unaccented syllable, it will, under the like circumstances, be designated by 5, 6, 7, 8; and by 9, 10, 11, 12, when it begins with two unaccented syllables.

When the section ends with one or two unaccented syllables, we shall represent such ending by subjoining *l* or *ll* to the figure, indicating such section, thus—*1l. 2ll.*

We will now arrange our rimes, and begin with such as are found in the section of two accents.

The section 1. was at all times rare, it generally occurs as the last section of a verse.

But he that in his deid was wiss,  
Wyst thai assemblyt: *war* | and *quhar* |.  
*The Bruce, 2. 561.*

But he has gotten, to our grief,  
Ane to succeed him,  
A chiel wha'll soundly: *buff* | our *beef* |,  
I meikle dread him.  
*Burns. The Two Herds.*

*1l.* was common, and often contained the sectional rime in Anglo-Saxon.

*Sar* | and *sor* | *ge*: *susl* throwedon.  
Pain and sorrow and sulphur bore they.  
*Cædmon. Gen. 75.*

Stunede seo brune  
*Yth* | with *oth* | *re*: ut feor adraf  
On wendel-sæ: wigendra scola.  
——— Dash'd the brown  
Wave, one 'gainst other; and far out-drove,  
On Wendel-sea, the warrior bands.  
*Alfred. Met. 26. 29.*

——— Strang wæs and rethe  
Se the wætrum weold: *wreak* | and *theah* | *te*  
Manfæhthu bearn.

——— Strong was he and fierce  
That wielded the waters; he cover'd and o'erwhelm'd  
The children of wrath.  
*Cædmon. Gen. 1376.*

According to rule, we find both vowels and final consonants riming in the *second* section.

Section 2. is sometimes, but rarely, found containing rime.

*Skill* | mixt with *will* | : is he that teaches best.

*Tusser*, § 95. 3 (E. D. S.).

*Will* | stooede for *skill* | : and law obeyed lust ;

*Might* | trode down *right* | : of king there was no feare.

*Ferrers*. *M. for M. Somerset*, 38.

The section 2l. was very commonly rimed, particularly by the Anglo-Saxon poets. The rime was mostly double, and sometimes perfect.

*Frod* | ne and *god* | ne : fæder Unwenes.

The wise and good father of Unwin. *Traveller's Song*, 114.

————— Ac hi halig god

*Fer* | ede and *ner* | ede : fiftena stod

Deop ofer dunum : sæ-drence flod

Monnes elna.

————— But them holy God

Led and rescued ; fifteen it stood

Of man's ells, high o'er the downs—

Sea-drenching flood.

*Cædmon*. *Gen.* 1396.

————— Fold was adæled . . .

*Wæt* | er of *wæt* | rum : tham the wuniath gyt

Under fæstenne.

————— Earth was parted

The waters from the waters,—those that yet won [dwell]

Under the firmament.

*Cædmon*. *Gen.* 150.

*Swil* | cum and *swil* | cum : thu meaht sweotole ongitan.

By such and such things thou mayst plainly see, &c.

*Alfred*. *Met.* 26. 107.

*Light* | ly and *bright* | ly : breaks away

The morning from her mantle grey.

*Byron*. *Siege of Corinth*, 22.

What will you have ? Me or your pearl again ?

*Nei* | ther of *ei* | ther : I remit both twain.

*L. L. L.* 5. 2. 458.

This riming section not unfrequently closed the couplet in Anglo-Saxon verse.

Tha wæron gesette : *wid|e* and *sid|e*.

They were y-set wide and far. *Cædmon. Gen. 10.*

—— Garsecg theahte

Sweart synnihte : *wid|e* and *sid|e*

Wonne wegas.

—— Ocean cover'd

Black with lasting-night, wide and far

Wan pathways. *Cædmon. Gen. 117.*

Ofer lichoman : *læn|ne* and *sæn|ne*.

Over the body weak and sluggish.

*Alfred. Met. 26. 106.*

The riming section *wide* and *side* became, like many of the others, a household phrase. It still survives in some of our northern dialects.

The section 5 was often selected for the rime by our later poets.

By *leave |* and *love |*: of God above,

I mind to shew, in verses few,

How through the breers my youthful years

Have run their race. *Tusser, § 113. 2.*

Her *look |* was *like |*: the morning's eye.

*Burns. Lass o' Ballochmyle.*

It is too much, we daily hear,

To *wive |* and *thrive |*: both in a year.

*Tusser, § 67. 8.*

To *feede |* my *neede |*: he will me leade

To pastures green and fat ;

He forth brought me, in libertie,

To waters delicate.

Yet *though |* I *go |*: through death his wo, &c.

*Archbishop Parker.*

He *told |* the *gold |*: upon the board.

*Heir of Linne.*

They *rush'd |* and *push'd |*: and blude outgush'd.

*Burns. Sheriff Muir, st. 2.*

Let other poets raise a fracas

'Bout *vines |* and *wines |*: an' drunken Bacchus.

*Burns. Scotch Drink, st. 1.*

And then to see how ye're negleckit,

How *huff'd |* an' *cuff'd |*: an' disrepeckit.

*Burns. Twa Dogs.*

We will now proceed to the verse of five accents.

Herein my folý vaine may plain appear  
 What *hap* | they *heape* | : which try out cunning slights.  
*Higg. M. for M. King Bladud*, 19.

He *staid* | his *steed* | : for humble miser's sake.  
*F. Q. 2. 1. 9.*

At *last* | when *lust* | : of meat and drink was ceas'd.  
*F. Q. 2. 2. 39.*

———— These kites  
 That *bate* | and *beat* | : and will not be obedient.  
*Tam. of the Shrew*, 4. 1. 208.

I'll *look* | to *like* | : if looking liking move. *R. & J. 1. 3. 97.*

The hous thai tuk, and Southeroun put to ded ;  
 Gat *nane* | bot *ane* | : with lyff out of that sted.  
*Wallace*, 9. 1653.

Yet *none* | but *one* | : the scepter long did sway,  
 Whose conquering name endures until this day.  
*Niccols. M. for M. Arthur*, 5.

So *might* | not *right* | : did thrust me to the crown.  
*Blennerhasset. M. for M. Vortigern*, 13.

They *playde* | not *prayed* | : and did their God displease.  
*Blennerhasset. M. for M. Vortigern*, 16.

In *fight* | and *flight* | : nigh all their host was slayne.  
*Higgins. M. for M. King Albanact*, 40.

For *hoape* | is *sloape*<sup>1</sup> | : and hold is hard to snatch,  
 Where bloud embrues the hands that come to catch.  
*Higgins. M. for M. King Forrex*, 18.

I made them all, that knew my name, agast . . .  
 To *shrinke* | and *slinke* | : and shift away for fear.  
*Higgins. King Morindus*, 4.

Their *spite* | , their *might* | : their falsehood never restes.  
*Baldwin. M. for M. Rivers*, 34.

Ne *can* | the *man* | : that moulds in idle cell  
 Unto her happy mansion attain. *F. Q. 2. 3. 41.*

No *reach* | no *breach* | : that might him profit bring,  
 But he the same did to his purpose wring.  
*Spens. Mother Hubbard's Tale*, 1141.

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<sup>1</sup> [Slippery.]

——— He hath won  
 With *fame* | a *name* |: to Caius Marcius; these  
 In honour follows Coriolanus. *Cor.* 2. 1. 180.

With *cuffs* | and *ruffs* |: and farthingales and things.  
*Tam. of the Shrew*, 4. 3. 56.

——— All this derision  
 Shall *seem* | a *dream* |: and fruitless vision.  
*M. N. D.* 3. 2. 370.

When shall you see me write a thing in rhyme?  
 Or *groan* | for *Joan* |<sup>1</sup>: or spend a minute's time  
 In pruning me? When shall you hear that I  
 Will praise a hand, a foot, a face, an eye,  
 A *gait* |, a *state* |: a brow, a breast, a waist?  
*L. L. L.* 4. 3. 181.

The rime is much less common in the last section of a verse.

Bid those beware: that *weene* | to *win* |  
 By bloody deeds the crown,  
 Lest from the height: they *fee*le | the *fall* |  
 Of topsye turvy down.  
*Higg. M. for M. King Porrex (near the end).*

Good husbandmen: must *moil* | and *toil* |. *Tusser*, § 4. 1.

Then ye may tell: how *pell* | and *mell* |,  
 By red claymores and muskets' knell,  
 Wi' dying yell, the tories fell  
 And whigs, &c. *Burns. Sheriff Muir*, st. 6.

With foul reproaches and disdainful spight  
 He vilely entertains: and *will* | or *nill* |,  
 Bears her away. *F. Q.* 1. 3. 43.

5l. was often rimed by the Anglo-Saxon poets, but rarely by their successors.

*Gegrem* | *ed grym* | me: *grap* on wrathe—  
 Grimly enraged he seized in wrath— *Cadmon*, 62.

——— Ne mæg his ærende  
 His *bod* | a *beod* | an: thy ic wat thæt he inc abolgen wyrrh.

Nor may his herald,  
 His errand do; therefore, I wot, with you enrag'd he'll be.  
*Cadmon*, 558.

<sup>1</sup> [But the Globe edition has: "Or groan for love?"—W. W. S.]

To rule the kingdom both wee left, and fell  
To war|ring, jar|ring : like two hounds of hell.

*Higgins. M. for M. King Forrez, 5.*

And will | you, will | you : I will marry you.

*Taming of the Shrew, 2. 1. 273.*

Section 6. also was often rimed by our old writers.

With swordes | and no wordes|: wee tried our appeale.

*Ferrers. M. for M. Gloucester, i. 18.*

—— In bed as I lay,

What time | strake the chime|: of mine hour extreme,  
Opprest | was my rest|: with mortal affray,  
My foes | did uncloze|: I know not which way,  
My chamber-doors.

*Ferrers. M. for M. Gloucester, ii. 60.*

Sow barley and dredge with a plentiful hand,  
Lest weed | 'stead of seed|: overgroweth thy land.

*Tusser. Sept. Husb. 13.*

A wand|in thy hand|: though ye fight not at all,  
Makes youth to their business better to fall.

*Tusser, § 77. 7.*

Then up | with your cup|: till you stagger in speech,  
And match | me this catch|: though you swagger and screech,  
And drink | till you wink|: my merry men each.

*W. Scott. Kenilworth, ch. 2.*

To teach and unteach|: in a school is unmeet,  
To do and undo|: to the purse is unsweet.

*Tusser, § 23. 15.*

Both bear | and forbear|: now and then as ye may,  
Then "Wench! God a mercy" thy husband will say.

*Tusser, § 89. 14.*

This riming section sometimes ends the verse.

But hold to their tackling : there do | but a few|.

*Tusser, § 35. 45.*

Like a demigod here : sit I | in the sky|. *L. L. L. 4. 3. 79.*

To feel only looking : on fair|est of fair|.

*L. L. L. 2. 1. 241.*

The section 6l. seems to have been a very favourite one for the double rime. It is only found in verse of the triple measure, or its predecessor the "tumbling verse."

So many as love me, and use me aright,  
With treas|ure and pleas|ure : I richly requite. *Tusser, § 7.*

Who *car|eth* nor *spar|eth* : till spent he hath all,  
Of *bob|bing*, not *rob|bing* : be fearful he shall.

*Tusser*, § 10. 35.

Not *fear|ing* nor *car|ing* : for hell nor for heaven.

*Tusser*, § 10. 60

He *noy|eth*, *destroy|eth* : and all to this drift,  
To strip his poor tenant.

*Tusser*, § 10. 13.

Tithe *du|lie* and *true|lie* : with hartie good will,  
That God and his blessing may dwell with thee still.

*Tusser*, § 57. 11.

So *due|ly* and [so] *true|ly* : the laws alway to scan,  
That right may take his place.

*Ferrers*. *M. for M. Tresilian*, 21.

So *catch|ers* and *snatch|ers* : toil both night and day,  
Not *needy*, but *greedy* : still prolling for their prey.

*Ferrers*. *M. for M. Tresilian*, 11

Then *shak|ing* and *quak|ing* : for dread of a dream,  
Half *wak|ed*, all *nak|ed* : in bed as I lay—  
My foes did uncloze, I know not which way,  
My chamber-dores.

*Ferrers*. *M. for M. Gloucester*, ii. 60.

The Sections with three accents rime much more rarely than those with two. They differ also from the latter in admitting various dispositions of the riming syllables. The rime will be ranged under the first, second, or third class, accordingly as it exists between the two first accented syllables, the two last, or the two extremes.

#### Section 1.

Sundry sorts of whips,  
As disagreement : *health's* | or *wealth's* | decrease|.

*Baldwin*. *M. for M. Rivers*, 18.

The | *wes bold* | *gebyld* : er thu geboren were.  
For thee was a dwelling built ere thou wert born.

*Grave Song*.

Gasta weardum : *hæf|don gleam* | and *dream* |.

For the spirit-guards— : They had light and joy.

*Cædmon*. *Gen*. 12.

For all our good descends from God's good will,  
And of our lewdness : *spring|eth all* | our *ill* |.

*Higgins*. *M. for M. Lord Irenglas*, 10.



In daunger rather : to | be *drent* | than *brent* |.

*F. Q. 2. 6. 49.*

### Section 11.

Tha com ofer foldan : fus sithian

*Mæ* | e *mer* | gen thrid | da : *næron* metode tha gyt

Wid lond, &c.

Then gan o'er earth quickly advance

The great third morn, nor had the Maker as yet

Wide land, &c.

*Cædmon. Gen. 154.*

Cwæth se Hehsta : *hat* | *an sceol* | de *Sat* | *an*.<sup>1</sup>

Quoth the Highest, Satan he should hight.

*Cædmon. Gen. 344.*

### Section 2.

——— Some magician's art,

*Arm'd* | *thee* or *charm'd* | *thee* strong : which thou from heav'n

Feign'd'st at thy birth was giv'n thee in thy hair.

*Samson, 1133.*

If no mishap men's doings did assail,

Or | that their *acts* | and *facts* | : were innocent.

*Higgins. M. for M. King Malin, 1.*

Hap | ly to *wive* | and *thrive* | : as best I may.

*Tam. of the Shrew, 1. 2. 56.*

We | will have *rings* | and *things* | : and fine array.

*Tam. of the Shrew, 2. 1. 325.*

Yet | she loves *none* | but *one* | : that Marinel is hight.

*F. Q. 3. 5. 8.*

But Florimel with him : un | to his *bow'r* | he *bore* |.

*F. Q. 3. 8. 36.*

### Section 21.

In sumptuous tire she joy'd herself to prank,

But | of her *love* | too *lav* | ish : little have she thank.

*F. Q. 2. 2. 36.*

——— And said he wolde

Hire lemman be : wheth | er she *wol* | de or *no* | de.

*Chau. Man of Lawes Tale; C. T. 5337.*

### Section 31.

Thus | they *tug* | ged and *rug* | ged : till it was ner nyght.

*Turnament of Tottenham, st. 23.*

Hav | e I *twy* | es or *thry* | es : redyn thurgh the route.

*Same, st. 13.*

<sup>1</sup> [Grein ends the line with *sceolde*.—W. W. S.]

*Sec* | *can* soh | *te ic* and *Bec* | *can* : Seafolan and Theodric.

Secca sought I and Becca, Seafola, and Theodric.

*Traveller's Song*, 115.

The section 5. is much more frequently used for this purpose, particularly with rime of the third class.

1st Class. ↓

This *blade* | in *bloud* | *y hand* | : perdy, I beare.

*Higgins. M. for M. King Morindus*, 1.

And *fair* | *ly fare* | on foot | : however loth. *F. Q. 2. 2. 12.*

———— But honour, virtue's meed,  
Doth *bear* | the *fair* | *est flower* | : in honourable seed.

*F. Q. 2. 3. 10,*

We little have : and *love* | to *live* | in peace |.

*Higgins. M. for M. King Morindus*, 5.

Sith needes I must repented faults forerunne,

Repent and tell : the *fall* | and *foile* | I felt |.

*Blennerhasset. M. for M. Vortigern*, 10.

A faire persone : and *strong* | and *yong* | of ag | e,

And full of honour, and of curtesie.

*Chau. Clerkes Tale; C. T. 7949.*

2nd Class.

Rather let try extremities of chance,  
Than enter | *priz* | ed *praise* | : for dread to disavaunce.

*F. Q. 3. 11. 24.*

Rocks, caves |, lakes, *fens* |, bogs, *dens* | : and shades of death.

*P. L. 2. 621.*

Milton here uses rime to strengthen his accent. His verse wanted such aid, and he has applied it skilfully. His contempt for these "jingling" sounds never led him to reject them, where they could do good service.

Traistis for trewth : thus war | thai *ded* | in *deed* |.

*Wallace*, 11. 183.

What lucke had I : on such | a *lot* | to *light* |.

*Higg. M. for M. King Locrinus*, 18.

I made thy heart to quake,  
When on thy crest : with migh | *ty stroke* | I *strake* |.

*Higg. M. for M. Lord Nennius*, 24.

So lightly leese they all : which all | do weene | to win|.

*Baldwin. M. for M. Tresilian, 1.*

### 3rd Class.

He all their ammunition,  
And *feats* | of war | defeats.

*Samson, 1277.*

The *broyles* | at sea|, the *toiles* | : I taken had at land.

*Higg. M. for M. King Brennus, 15.*

And I amongst my mates, the Romish fryers, felt,  
More *joye* | and less | *anoye* | : than erst in Britain brave.

*Higg. M. for M. Cadwallader, l. 136.*

And *load* | upon | him *laid* | : his life for to have had.

*F. Q. 3. 5. 22.*

Their *arm* | our help'd | their *harm* | : crush'd in and bruised.

*P. L. 6. 656.*

Seeing the state : *unstead* | fast how | it *stode* |.

*Sackville. M. for M. Buckingham, 12.*

My rule, my riches, royal blood and all,  
When fortune frownde : the *fel* | ler made | my *fall* |.

*Sackville. M. for M. Buckingham, 108.*

What horse ? a roan, a crop-ear is it not ?

It is, my lord : That *roan* | shall be | my *throne* |.

*1 H. IV. 2. 3. 72.*

Section 5l. is rarely rimed.

And do I hear my Jeanie own  
That equal transports move her ?  
I ask for dearest life alone,  
That I | may *live* | to *love* | her.

*Burns. Come let me take thee.*

Some apology may be due for such an overflow of authority. It should be remembered, that these riming sections are of the very essence of our vernacular poetry. They form the poetical idiom, the common stock—of which the Anglo-Saxon *Scop* and the *Maker* of Elizabeth's reign alike availed themselves. From the sixth to the sixteenth century, we find the same rimes again and again recurring in our poetry; and even when banished from what, in courtesy, we call polite literature, we find them still lingering in the songs of the people. Some of them can boast an antiquity, which

alone ought to secure them our respect; and others have sunk so deeply into our language, that all who pay attention to philology, must feel an interest in tracing their origin.

## INVERSE RIME

is that which exists between the last accented syllable of the first section, and the first accented syllable of the second. It appears to have flourished most in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. I do not remember any instance of it in the Anglo-Saxon, but it is probably of native growth. A kindred dialect, the Icelandic, had, at an early period, a species of rime closely resembling the present—the second verse always beginning with the last accented syllable of the first. It is singular that the French had, in the sixteenth century, a rime like the Icelandic, called by them *la rime entrelassée*. The present rime differed from both, as it was contained in one verse. The rime was sometimes of the sixth kind, and sometimes consonantal; but, in the great majority of instances, it was perfect. The inverse rime is, I believe, the only one in our language that has ever affected a perfect correspondence between the riming syllables.

We will begin with the verse of four accents.

These steps | both *reach* |: and *teach* | thee shall |  
To come | by *thrift* |: to *shift* | withal |. *Tusser*, § 9. 39.

Some, lucky, find a flow'ry spot,  
For which they never toil'd nor swat,  
They drink | the *sweet* |: and *eat* | the fat |.  
*Burns to James Smith*, st. 17.

Where with intention I have err'd,  
No other plea I have,  
But thou | art *good* |: and *good* | ness still |  
Delighteth to forgive. *Burns. A Prayer.*

Take you my lord and master than,  
Unless | *mischance* |: *mischanc* | eth me |,  
Such homely gift of me your man.  
*Tusser to Lord W. Paget.*

The pi | per *loud* |: and *loud* | er blew |,  
The dancers | *quick* |: and *quick* | er flew |.  
*Burns. Tam o' Shanter.*

O Henderson the man! the brother!

And art | thou *gone* |: and *gone* | for ev<sup>er</sup>!

*Burns. Elegy on M. Henderson.*

Let prudence bless enjoyment's cup,

Then rap | tur'd *sip* |: and *sip* | it up |.

*Burns. Written in Friars-Carse Hermitage.*

The rime is generally double when the verse is in the triple measure.

Be greedy in spending and careless to save,

And short | ly be *need* | y : and *read* | y to crave |.

*Tusser. January Husbandry, st. 4.*

His breast | full of *ran* | cour : like *can* | her to fret |,

His heart like a lion, his neighbour to eat.

*Tusser (Envious Neighbour), § 64.*

Your beauty's a flow'r in the morning that blows,

And with | ers the *fas* | ter : the *fas* | ter it grows |.

*Burns. Hey for a Lass.*

— Come pleasure or pain,

My warst | word is *wel* | come : and *wel* | come again |.

*Burns. Contented w<sup>th</sup> little.*

In the verse of five accents the inverse rime is most frequent, when there are two accents in the first section.

In such | a *plight* |: what *might* | a la | dy doe |.

*Higg. M. for M. Queen Elstride, 26.*

And let | report |: your *fort* | itude | commend |.

*Higg. M. for M. King Brennus, 85.*

His baser breast, but in his kestrel kind,

A pleasing vein of glory he did find,

To which his flowing tongue and troublous spright

Gave | him great *aid* |: and *made* | him more | inclin'd |.

*F. Q. 2. 3. 4.*

She must | lie *here* |: on *mere* | neces | sity |.

*L. L. Lost, l. 1. 149.*

We plough | the *deep* |: and *reap* | what oth'ers sow |.

*Waller. A Panegyric to my Lord Protector, st. 16.*

The following are instances of consonantal and perfect rimes.

The rich and poor and ev'ry one may see,

Which way | to *love* |: and *live* | in due | degree |.

*Higgins. M. for M. King Albanact, prol. 9.*

When I am dead and rotten in my dust,  
Then gin | to *live* |: and *leave* | when oth|ers lust|.

*Hall to his Satires, Prol. to Book IV.*

For God | is *just* |: *injust* | ice will | not thrive|.

*Higg. M. for M. King Humber, 17.*

Thus made | of *might* |: the *might* | iest | to wring|.

*Baldwin. M. for M. Rivers, 25.*

I fol|low'd *fast* |: but *fast* | er did | he fly|.

*M. N. D. 3. 2. 416.*

For all | I *did* |: I *did* | but as | I ought|.

*F. Q. 2. 1. 33.*

For he | was *flesh* |: all *flesh* | doth frail|ty breed|.

*F. Q. 2. 1. 52.*

Weak | she makes *strong* |: and *strong* | thing doth increase|.

*F. Q. 2. 2. 31.*

If | you were *men* |: as *men* | ye are | in show|,

You would not use a gentle lady so.

*M. N. D. 3. 2. 151.*

Vows | are but *breath* |: and *breath* | a va|pour is|.

*Love's Labour Lost, 4. 3. 68.*

——— Folly in wisdom hatcht,  
Hath wisdom's warrant, and the help of school  
And wit's | own *grace* |: to *grace* | a learn|ed fool|.

*L. L. Lost, 5. 1. 70.*

O hap|py *love* |: where *love* | like this | is found|.

*Burns's Cottar's Saturday Night, st. 9.*

This rime is much more rare, when the first section contains three accents.

Herein | my ful|ly *vayne* |: may *playne* | appear|.

*Higgins. M. for M. King Bladud, 19.*

And | by my fa|ther's *love* |: and *leave* | am arm'd|

With his good will and thy good company. *T. of the S. 1. 1. 5.*

But wheth|er they | be *ta'en* |: or *slain* | we hear | not.

*R. II. 5. 6. 4.*

That brought | into | this *world* |: a *world* | of woe|.

*P. L. 9. 11.*

For | it is chaste | and *pure* |: as *pur* | est snow|.

*F. Q. 2. 2. 9.*

For | 'tis a sign | of *love* |: and *love* | to Rich|ard

Is a strange brooch in this all-hating world.

*R. II. 5. 5. 65.*

The double rime is very rare in the verse of five accents.

The musis freedome, graunted them of elde,  
Is barde; | alye rea|sons : trea|sons high | are held|.

*M. for M. Collingbourn, 1.*

The inverse rime was not unfrequent in the verse of six accents. Spenser loved to close with it his beautiful and majestic stanza.

Whereby | with eas|y payne| : great gayne | we did | in fet|.

*Baldwin. M. for M. Trisilian, 8.*

He nev|er meant | with words| : but swords | to plead | his right|.

*F. Q. 1. 4. 42.*

By sub|tilty | nor slight| : nor might | nor might|y charm|.

*F. Q. 1. 11. 36.*

And what | I can|not quite| : requite | with u|sury|.

*F. Q. 1. 8. 27.*

✓ So good|ly did | beguile| : the guil|er of | his prey|.

*F. Q. 2. 7. 64.*

└ Therefore | need mote | he live| : that liv|ing gives | to all|.

*F. Q. 3. 6. 47.*

And made | that cap|tives thrall| : the thrall | of wretch|edness |.

*F. Q. 2. 4. 16.*

—— Tried in heaviest plight

Of la|bours huge | and hard| : too hard | for hu|man wight|.

*Milton. The Passion, 13.*

#### ALLITERATION.

The laws which regulate the Anglo-Saxon verse, have been the subject of much speculation. Rask claims the merit of their discovery, and does not affect to hide his triumph over the blindness and stupidity of our countrymen. The opinions of Hickes, Conybeare, and Turner, are submitted to review, and dismissed with an air of very superior scholarship. The extreme deference, with which these claims have been listened to, and the acquiescence which has been paid to them in this country, is the best proof I have met with of that ignorance, with which he and other foreigners have thought fit to charge us.

According to Rask, the law of Anglo-Saxon alliteration is this. In every alliterative couplet, there must be three syllables (and no more) beginning with the same letters, two in the first section, and one in the second. If the riming syllables begin with vowels, such vowels should if possible be different. Each of the three syllables must take the accent. He gives for example the two couplets;

Tha was after wiste  
Wop up a-hafen.

Eotenas and ylfe,  
And orcnæas.

There was after the feast  
A cry rais'd. (*Beow.* 128).

Giants, and elves,  
And spectres. (*Beow.* 112.)

He adds that *sometimes* in short verses there is but one riming letter in the first section.

Now the first thing that strikes us, is, that these are the rules which Olaus Wormius laid down for the regulation of Scandinavian verse. The passage is familiar to all who interest themselves in these matters, and was quoted by Hickes. The merit then of Rask must lie in their application. Do the same rules apply to the Anglo-Saxon as to the Icelandic verse?

In the later poems—those of the tenth and eleventh century—these rules partially hold; and I think more closely in the old English poems, which were contemporary with the great mass of Icelandic literature. But the flower of Anglo-Saxon literature was of much earlier date, and here the rules fail in the majority of instances. More than two-thirds of the couplets with four accents, and of the couplets with five more than one-half, have only *two* riming syllables. Even of the couplets with six accents, there is a large proportion in the like predicament. We find also in many couplets more than three alliterative syllables. I cannot think that much merit was due for the application of a principle, that fits thus loosely.

These rules had been long recognised as applicable to Icelandic verse. They were not only laid down by Olaus Wormius, but also in the Hättalykill or Metre-key, the well-known Icelandic prosody, composed in the thirteenth century. Several writers had also recognised Anglo-Saxon



verse as alliterative, though no one had discovered the laws which governed its alliteration. We have examined the rules which Rask has proposed for this purpose, and will now venture to lay down others, which we think may be trusted to with greater safety.

1st. Every alliterative couplet had two accented syllables, containing the same initial consonants, one in each of the two sections.

2ndly. In a large proportion of instances, particularly in the longer couplets, the first section contained two such syllables. This custom gradually became so prevalent, that after the tenth century it may be considered as the general law.

3rdly.. Sometimes, though rarely, the *second* section had two riming syllables.

4thly. The absence of initial consonants satisfied the alliteration. As a correspondence in the vowels seems to have been avoided, these syllables generally began with different vowels, when the initial consonants were wanting.

Rask has broadly stated, that the second section cannot admit two riming syllables, and has ventured to impugn the conclusions of such a man as Conybeare, because they were opposed to this "law of alliteration." I therefore give the following examples in proof of the third rule.

Cwædon that hie rice : rethe mode  
Ag|an wol|dun : and | swa eath|e meah|ton.

Qnoth they in wrathful mood, that they the kingdom  
Would have, and that with ease they might.

*Cædmon. Gen. 47.*

Tha tha Aulixes : leafe hæfde  
Thrac|ia cyn|ing : that | he thon|an mos|te.

When Ulysses had leave,  
Thracia's king, that he might thence— *Alfred. Met. 26. 21.*

———— Rathe was gefylled  
Heah | cyning|es hæs| : him | was hal|ig leoht.

———— Quick was fulfill'd  
The high-king's hest : around him was holy light.

*Cædmon. Gen. 123.*

The number might easily be increased ; but the reader

can do this for himself, when we come to the consideration of our Anglo-Saxon rhythms.

In the longer species of verse, when the couplet contained more than six accents, three riming syllables in one section were common, both in the first section, and in the second.

Alfred used occasionally three riming syllables in the first section, when the couplet contained six, and even when it contained five accents. But such instances are rare.

We also find couplets in which the alliteration is, as it were, double—the same two letters beginning accented syllables in the second section, as in the first. Such instances are far from unfrequent. The coincidence, however, may be accidental.

It should be observed, that in Cædmon and the earlier poets, the initial consonants are not always rimed correctly. They seem satisfied if the first consonants correspond, and often make *s* rime with *sw* or *sc*. After the tenth century, there was in general a more accurate correspondence.

In the alliterative poems of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, we find the *vowels* corresponding much more frequently than in Anglo-Saxon. So much was this kind of rime affected by the writers, who ushered in the æra of Elizabeth, that we have elsewhere called it “modern alliteration.” Alliteration indeed, as a system, had long been banished to the North, but every “maker” was hunting after rime, initial or final, and thus came the last improvement upon the simple alliteration of our ancestors.

But when ambition bleared both our eyes,  
And *has|ty hate|*: had brotherhode bereft.

*Higg. M. for M. King Forrez, 5.*

What *hart|* so *hard|*: but doth abhorre to hear.

*Francis Segar. M. for M. Richard, 1.*

Not *raign|ing* but *rag|ing*: as youth did him intice.

*Baldwin. M. for M. Tresilian, 16.*

Enregister my mirrour to remaine,  
That princes may: my *vic|es vile|* refrayne’.

*Higgins. M. for M. King Iago, 2.*

Devyded well : we *joint* | ly did | enjoy |  
The princely seate.

*Higgins. M. for M. King Forrex, 4.*

But since thy outside looks so fair and warlike,  
And that thy tongue : some say | of *breed* | ing *breathes* |.  
*Lear, 5. 3. 143.*

Wave | rolling af | ter *wave* | : where *way* | they found.  
*P. L. 7. 298.*

#### UNACCENTED RIME.

Hitherto we have assumed that the accent always falls upon the riming syllable. There is little doubt, that Olaus Wormius wished to provide against a violation of this rule, when he laid it down, that the riming syllables of a section must not follow each other *immediately*. There is, however, one exception, an exception which seems to have arisen from the slender dimensions of an Anglo-Saxon verse, or, as we have hitherto termed it, alliterative couplet. Into verses of this kind, containing only four accents, some poets managed to crowd final rime, middle rime, sectional rime, and alliteration. This could hardly be effected unless the unaccented syllables were put in requisition, as in the following passage ;

*Flah* | *mah* flit | eth : *flan* | *man* hwit | eth  
*Burg* | *sorg* bit | eth : *bald* | *ald* thwit | eth,  
*Wræc* | *fæc* writh | ath : *wrath* | *ath* smit | eth, &c.

The javelin-man fighteth, the archer —

The borough-grief biteth, —

The vengeance-hour flourisheth, the anger-oath smiteth.<sup>1</sup>

*Rime-Song, 62.*

We have one or two instances of this rime even in Cædmon, which shews, that the difficulty of joining alliteration and sectional rime had made the invention familiar at a very early period.

on thone eagum wlat

*Stið* | -*frið* cyn | ing : and tha stow beheold  
Dreama lease.

<sup>1</sup> [Sense uncertain.—W. W. S.]

On it with eyes glanced  
 The stalwart king ; and the place beheld  
 All joyless. *Cædmon. Gen. 106.*

*Frynd | synd hie min | e georn | e*  
*Holde on hyra hyge-sceaftum.*

Friends are they of mine right-truly, faithful in their heart's deep  
 councils. *Cædmon. Gen. 287.*

In like manner, the narrow dimensions of their verse drove the Icelanders to a similar invention. The riming syllables, however, were differently disposed of. The first syllable bore the accent and the alliteration ; the second, which of course was unaccented, rimed with some accented syllable in the same section, and generally with the second alliterative syllable. The rime was consonantal. This difference of the rime, together with the different position of the syllables, must have produced effects widely different in the two languages. Perhaps we might infer, that the unaccented rime was invented, at a period subsequent to the separation of the two races.

In the early part of the sixteenth century, there were instances, in which writers—some of great merit—actually closed their verse with a rime between unaccented syllables. This arose, no doubt, from the prevalence of the “ tumbling verse,” of which we shall have more to say hereafter, and which at one time threatened to confound all our notions of rhythmical proportion. Of all our writers of reputation, Wyat most sinned in this way. In some of his smaller pieces, nearly one-fourth of the rimes are of this nature.

Right true it is, and said full yore ago,  
 Take heed | of him | : that by | the back | thee claw | eth,  
 For none is worse than is a friendly foe.  
 Though thee | seme good | : all thing | that thee | deli | teth,  
 Yet know | it well | : that in | thy bos | ome crep | eth ;  
 For man | y a man | : such fire | oft times | he kind | leth,  
 That | with the blase | : his beard | himself | he sing | eth.  
*Wyat. Of the fained Frend.*

In the above stanza Wyat intended to rime *claweth*, *deliteth*, *crepeth* ; and also the words *kindleth* and *singeth*.

In the following staves he rimes *other* with *higher* ;

But one | thing yet |: there is | above | all oth | er,  
 I gave him winges whereby he might upflye  
 To hon | our and fame |: and if | he would | to high | er  
 Than mortal things, above the starry skye.

*Wyat. Complaint upon Love.*

There are also cases in which an unaccented syllable is made to rime with one accented.

She reft | my heart |: and I | a glove | from her |,  
 Let us see then |: if one | be worth | the oth | er.

*Wyat. To his Love.*

And Bac | chus eke |: ensharps | the wit | of some |,  
 Fæcun | di cal | ices |: quem non | fece | re diser | tum.

*Higgins. M. for M. King Chirinnus, 2.*

#### DOUBLY-ACCENTED RIME

seems to owe its origin to the lavish use of the substantives in *ion*. The facilities of rime afforded by the endings *ation*, *ition*, &c., were too great to be resisted, and they were used with such a profusion, as to make a great and certainly not a favourable impression on the language. Now *ion* was sometimes used as one syllable, and then the rime became double, *a | tion*; sometimes as two syllables, and then the rime was thrown on the last, *a | tion |*. Sometimes the poet began his rime with the first syllable, even when he resolved *ion* into two.

What ned | eth gret | er : di | lata | tion | ?  
 I say by treatise and ambassatrie,  
 And | by the pop | es : me | dia | tion |  
 They ben accorded.

*Chau. Man of Lawes Tale; C. T. 4652.*

A band | thai maid |: in prew | a illu | sion |,  
 At | thair pow | er : to wyrk | his confu | sion |.

*Wallace, 11. 205.*

When | they next wake |: all this | deris | ion |,  
 Shall seem | a dream |: and fruit | less vis | ion |.

*M. N. D. 3. 2. 370.*

If gra | cious si | lence : sweet | atten | tion |,  
 Quick sight | and quic | ker : appre | hen | sion |,  
 (The lights of judgment's throne) shine any where,  
 Our doubtful author hopes this is their sphere.

*B. Jonson. Prol. to Cynthia's Revels, l. 1.*

The double accent quickly passed to other terminations.

Her name was Agape, whose children werne,  
 All three | as one | : the first | hight *Pri|amond|*  
 The sec|ond *Di|amond|* : the young|est *Tri|amond|*.

*F. Q. 4. 2. 41.*

Skip|per, stand back | : 'tis age | that *nour|isheth|*,  
 But youth | in la|dies' eyes | : that *flour|isheth|*.

*Tam. of the Shrew, 2. 1. 341.*

A serious blunder was sometimes the result of this practice. There are examples, among the early Elizabethan writers and their immediate predecessors, where *ion* is resolved into two syllables in one line, while, in the one corresponding, it follows the last legitimate accent of the verse; so that we must either increase the proper number of accents, or falsify the rime. Even Spenser was guilty of this fault;

Who soon as he beheld that angel's face,  
 Adorn'd | with all : divine | *perfec|tion|*,  
 His cheered heart eftsoons away gan chase  
 Sad death |, revi|ved : with | her sad | *inspec|tion*,  
 And fee|ble spir|it : in|ly felt | *refec|tion*,  
 As wither'd weed through cruel winter's time,  
 That feels | the warmth | : of sun|ny beams | *reflec|tion*,  
 Lifts up his head, that did before decline,  
 And gins to spread his leaf before the fair sunshine.

*F. Q. 4. 12. 34.*

## CHAPTER VII.

## THE PAUSES,

which serve for the regulation of the rhythm, are three in number ; the *final*, *middle*, and *sectional*. The first occurs at the end of a verse, the second divides it into two sections, and the third is found in the midst of one of these sections. It is of great importance, that these pauses should not be confounded with such, as are only wanted for the purposes of grammar, or of emphasis. To keep them perfectly distinct, we shall always designate the latter as *stops*.

There is no doubt, that our stops were at one time identical with our pauses. In the Anglo-Saxon poems, we find the close of every sentence, or member of a sentence, coincident with a middle or final pause. In the works of Cædmon and other masters of the art, we find even the sectional pause so placed as to aid the sense ; though I never knew a regular division of a sentence, which thus fell in the midst of a section.

In the present chapter, we shall first examine the pauses in their order—final, middle, and sectional—and endeavour to settle the limits, which mark out their position in a sentence. We will then ascertain in what places of the verse the stops may fall ; or, in other words, how far the punctuation of a verse has, at different periods, been accommodated to its rhythm.

## THE FINAL PAUSE.

In the Anglo-Saxon, there does not appear to have been any distinction made between the middle and final pauses. The sections, whether connected by alliteration or not, were always separated by a dot, and were written continuously, like prose. In the old English alliterative poems, we find

the alliterative couplet, or the two sections that contained the alliteration, written in one line, like a modern verse. In these poems also we find a marked distinction between the two pauses, but the Anglo-Saxons—so far at least as regarded the pause—appear to have considered each section as a separate verse.

As a general rule, we may lay it down, that the final and middle pauses ought always to coincide with the close of a sentence, or of some member of a sentence. This rule may be best illustrated, by noticing such violations of it, as have at different periods been tolerated in our poetry.

Perhaps there never was a greater violation of those first principles, on which all rhythm must depend, than placing the final pause in the midst of a word. Yet of this gross fault Milton has been guilty more than once.

Cries the stall-reader "Bless me! what a word on  
A title page is this," and some in file  
Stand spelling false, while one might walk to *Mile-*  
*End* Green. *Sonnet, 6.*

And fabled how the serpent, whom they call'd  
Ophion, with Eurynome, the *wide-*  
*Encroaching* Eve perhaps, had first the rule  
Of high Olympus. *P. L. 10. 580.*

All must remember the ridicule, which was thrown upon this practice in the *Anti-Jacobin*; but Creech, in the hapless translation to which it is said the envy of Dryden urged him, had in sober earnest realized the absurdity.

Pyrrhus, you tempt a danger high,  
When you would tear from angry *li-*  
*Oness* her cubs. *Hor. Odes, 3. 20.*

There are many verbs followed by prepositions, which must, for certain purposes, be considered as compounds; and although, in some cases, words may be inserted between such verbs and their prepositions, yet they will not admit the pause.

With that he fiercely at him flew, and *laid*  
On hideous strokes, with most importune might.  
*F. Q. 6. 1. 20.*



Go to the Douglas, and *deliver* him  
Up to his pleasure, ransomless and free. 1 *H. IV. 5. 5. 28.*

Which from meane place in little time was *grown*  
Up unto him, that weight upon him laid ;  
And being got the nearest to his throne,  
He the more easily the great kingdom swaid.

*Drayton. M. for M. Cromwell, 43.*

Another serious fault is committed, when the final pause immediately follows and separates a qualifying word from the word qualified ; as when it thus separates the substantive from its adjective, or other word of like nature.

He joined to my brother John the *olde*  
*Duches* of Norfolk, notable of fame.

*Baldwin. M. for M. Rivers, 27.*

He answer'd nought at all, but adding *new*  
*Fear* to his first amazement, staring wide . . .  
Astonish'd stood. *F. Q. 1. 9. 24.*

——— Sir, if a *servant's*  
*Duty* with faith may be called love, you are  
More than in hope, you are possess'd of it.

*B. Jonson. Ev. Man in his H. 2. 3.*

More foul diseases than ere yet the *hot*  
*Sun* bred, thorough his burnings, while the dog  
Pursues the raging lion.

*Fletcher. Faithful Shepherdess, 1. 2.*

As where smooth Zephirus plays on the *fleet*  
*Face* of the curled streams, with flow'rs as many  
As the young spring gives.

*Fletcher. Faithful Shepherdess, 1. 3.*

And God created the great whales, and *each*  
*Soul* living, each that crept, which plenteously  
The waters generated.

*P. L. 7. 391.*

To judgment he proceeded on the *accus'd*  
*Serpent*, though brute ; unable to transfer  
The guilt on him who made him instrument  
Of mischief.

*P. L. 10. 163.*

First in his East the glorious lamp was seen . . .  
Invested with bright beams, jocund to run  
His longitude through Hea'vn's high road ; the *gray*  
*Dawn*, and the Pleiades, before him dauc'd. *P. L. 7. 370.*

Even the Anglo-Saxon poets occasionally placed the pause between the adjective and its substantive.

——— Stunede seo *brune*  
Yth with othre : ut feor adraf  
On Wendel *sæ* : wigendra scola.

——— Dash'd the brown  
Wave, one 'gainst other, and far out-drove  
On Wendel-sea the warrior bands. *Alfred. Met. 26. 29.*

Again, the pause should not occur immediately between the preposition and the words governed by it.

——— What did this vanity,  
But minister communication of  
A most poor issue ? *H. VIII. 1. 1. 85.*

——— Read o'er this,  
And after this, and then to breakfast with  
What appetite you have. *H. VIII. 3. 2. 201.*

When any of the personal pronouns immediately follow the verb, either in the dative or objective case, the connexion is too close to admit this pause between them.

I more desirous humbly did *request*  
Him shew th' unhappy Albion princes yore.  
*Higgins. M. for M. Induction, 12.*

At length I met a nobleman, they call'd  
Him Labienus, one of Cæsar's friends.  
*Higgins. M. for M. Lord Nennius, 29.*

——— At hand they spy  
That quicksand nigh, with water covered,  
But by the checked wave they did *descry*  
It plain, and by the sea discoloured. *F. Q. 2. 12. 18.*

——— Much better  
She ne'er had known pomp ; though it be *temporal*,  
Yet if that quarrel, fortune, do *divorce*  
It from the bearer, 'tis a suff'rance panging  
As soul and body parting. *H. VIII. 2. 8. 12.*

And did not manners and my love *command*  
Me to forbear, to make those understand,

——— I would have shown  
To all the world, the art, which thou alone  
Hast taught our tongue.

*Beaumont to B. Jonson, on his Fox, l. 11.*

——— Let it suffice thee that thou know'st  
*Us* happy, and without love no happiness. *P. L. 8. 620.*

For from my mother's womb this grace I *have*  
*Me* given by Eternal destiny. *F. Q. 2. 3. 45.*

When, however, the pronoun becomes emphatic by antithesis, or when it loses its character as pronoun, and has no reference to any antecedent, this position of the final pause is much less offensive. Yet even in this case caution is necessary.

Here Nature, whether more intent to *please*  
*Us*, or herself with strange varieties—  
*Denham. Cooper's Hill.*

It is a walk thick set with many a tree,  
 Whose arched bowes ore hed combined bee,  
 That nor the golden eye of heaven can peepe  
 Into that place, ne yet, when heaven doth weepe,  
 Can the thin drops of drizeling rain *offend*  
*Him*, that for succour to that place doth wend.  
*Niccols. M. for M. 2nd Induction, l. 133.*

#### THE MIDDLE PAUSE

is, in great measure, under the control of the same laws, as regulate the position of the final pause. But as the former has long ceased to have any visible index, and as its very existence has been the subject of doubt and speculation, we find the violations of these laws proportionably more frequent. We have indicated the place of the middle pause by the colon (:), which must be familiar to the reader, as marking the divisions of our ecclesiastical chaunts.

Whether English verse of four accents ought, in every case, to have a middle pause, is a question of difficulty which may be considered hereafter. There can be little doubt, that every verse with *more* than four accents ought to have the pause. We find this to be the case with the alliterative couplets of the Anglo-Saxons, with the alliterative verses of our old English poems, and with those more regular rhythms, which, chiefly under the patronage of

Chaucer, were established in their room. It was not till the middle of the fifteenth century that the dot, which indicated the middle pause, began to be omitted in our manuscripts, and no edition of Chaucer or his contemporaries can be perfect without it.

There are many instances, and some of high authority, in which the middle pause falls in the midst of a word. These, however, should not be imitated.

And negligent securitie and ease  
Unbrid|led sen|:sual|itie| begat|. *Drayton. M. for M.* 98.

Thy ang|er un|:appeas|able| still rag|es.  
*Samson Agonistes*, 963.

Some rousing motions in me, which dispose  
To some|thing ex|:traor|dinary| my thoughts|. *Samson Agonistes*, 1382.

It would be easy to crowd the page with verses of six accents, in which this middle pause, if it exist at all, must divide a word. But the writers of the sixteenth century used a verse of six accents, formed on a very different model from the ordinary one—to wit, containing two sections, one of four, the other of two accents. This difference of origin will, of course, account for the different position of the middle pause.

The following are instances in which the middle pause seems to be badly placed.

And Re|tie|:ric|es hyr|de  
And of Retia's realm the ruler. *Alfred. Met.* 26. 8.

He for despit, and for his tyrannie,  
To don|the ded|:bod|ies a vil|lani|e  
Of all our lordes, which that been yslawe,  
Hath all the bodies on an hepe ydrawe.  
*Chau. Knights Tale; C. T.* 943.

O Pallas, goddesse Soverayne,  
Bred out|of great|:Ju|piter's brayne|. *Puttenham. Parth.* 16.

And U|na wan|dring in|:woods| and forrests|. *F. Q.* 1. 2. 9.

But Phlegeton is son of Herebus and Night<sup>1</sup>

But Her|ebus | son of': Eter|nity | is hight|. *F. Q. 2. 4. 41.*

Pleas|ure the daugh|ter of': Cu|pid and Pay|che late|.

*F. Q. 3. 6. 50.*

#### SECTIONAL PAUSE.

We have said that, in Anglo-Saxon verse, the stops, which closed a sentence or a member of a sentence, were always coincident with a middle or final pause. We never meet with these stops in the midst of a section. The sectional pause had, in all probability, a very different origin. In *Cædmon* we find it before words, on which it is evidently the poet's intention to throw a powerful emphasis. Perhaps we may infer, that the sectional pause was originally a stop, that served the purposes of emphasis, as the others were stops which served the purposes of construction.

Whatever were its origin, we find the sectional pause well known and widely used in the earliest dawn of our literature. It is common in *Cædmon*, and in *Conybeare's* riming poem it is found in many sections together.

Treow | tel | gade : Tir | wel | gade

Blæd | blis | sade : —<sup>2</sup>

Gold | gear | wade : Gim | hwear | fade.

The tree shot forth branches ; Glory abounded ;

Fruit blessed us : —

Gold deck'd us ; Gems enwrap us.

*Rime-Song, 34.*

We shall not here range in order the sections, which have admitted the pause ; a chapter will be devoted to that purpose in the second book. At present we shall merely give one or two songs, in which the sectional pause has been studiously affected. The first is by Sir Philip Sydney. The verses are represented as having been "with some art curiously written."

<sup>1</sup> This is not the only verse in the *Faery Queen* which has six accents when it ought to have five. Like the *Æneid*, this noble poem was left unfinished.

<sup>2</sup> A section missing.

Vir|tue, beau|ty, and speech| : did strike|, *wound*|, *charm*|,  
 My heart|, *eyes*|, *ears*| : with won|der, love|, delight|,  
 First|, *sec*|ond, last| : did bind|, enforce|, and arme|,  
 His workes|, *showes*|, *suites*| : with wit|, grace, and |<sup>1</sup> vows might|.

Thus hon|our, lik|ing, trust| : much|, *farre*|, and *deep*|,  
 Held|, *pearst*|, possess| : my judg|ment, sense| and will|,  
 Till wrong|, contempt|, deceit| : did growe|, *steal*|, *creep*|,  
 Bandes|, *fa*|vour, faith| : to break|, defile|, and kill|.

Then grie|fe, unkind|ness, prooffe| : tooke|, *kind*|led, taught|,  
 Well ground|ed, no|ble, due| : spite|, *rage*|, disdain|,  
 But ah| alas| in wayne| : my mind|, *sight*|, *thought*|,  
 Doth him|, his face|, his words| : leave|, *shun*|, refrain|.

For noth|ing, time|, nor place| : can loose|, *quench*|, *ease*|  
 Mine own| embrac|ed, sought| : knot|, *fire*|, disease|.

*Arcadia. Lib. III. (1613), p. 368.*

The *curiosity* of these verses is much greater than their merit. The “art” consists in transforming the stops, which separate the words of a sequence, into sectional pauses.

This kind of experiment seems to have been a favourite one in the sixteenth century. Spenser, in one of his eclogues, had already written what he called a Roundle, in which the “under-song” had a sort of jerking liveliness imparted to it, by the free use of these sectional pauses. The piece has very little poetical merit, but is “curiously written.”

*Per.* It fell upon a holy Eve,

*Wil.* Hey | ho| : hol|iday|!

*Per.* When holy Fathers wont to *sprive*,

*Wil.* Now | gin|neth : this roun|delay|!

*Per.* Sitting upon a hill so high,

*Wil.* Hey | ho| : the high | hill|!

*Per.* The while my flock did feed thereby,

*Wil.* The while the shepherds self did spill|!

*Per.* I saw the bouncing Bellibone,

*Wil.* Hey | ho| : Bon|nibel|, &c. &c.

*Shep. Kal. August, 55.*

Shakespeare has left us a happier specimen.

<sup>1</sup> False accentuation.

Come away | come away | *death* |  
 And in sad cypress let me be laid ;  
 Fly away | fly away | *breath* |,  
 I am slain by a fair cruel maid.

Not a flower | not a flower | *sweet* |  
 On my black coffin let there be strown,  
 Not a friend | not a friend | *greet* |  
 My poor corpse where my bones shall be thrown.  
*Twelfth Night*, 2. 4. 52.

#### THE STOPS

may be divided, like our pauses, into final, middle, and sectional.

In Anglo-Saxon poems, the full stop falls indifferently at the end, or in the middle of an alliterative couplet. Of the two, the middle stop seems to have been preferred. In this particular, the Anglo-Saxon rhythms resemble the more ancient German, and are widely distinguished from the Icelandic. The latter, almost invariably, close their period with the couplet, like our own alliterative poems of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. As no Icelandic poem can be satisfactorily traced to an earlier date than these English poems, we may conclude, that the northern rhythms were influenced by the same causes, and affected at the same time, and in the same manner, as those of the more southern dialects.

In the metre, used by Chaucer and his school, we generally find the middle stop subordinate to the final ; but our dramatists, whose dialogue required frequent breaks in the rhythm, gave to the middle stop all its former importance. The poets of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries run their lines one into the other, even when they were writing what has been called the heroic couplet—a license that was very slowly corrected by the example of Waller, Denham, and above all of Dryden. The last poet, in his riming tragedies, broke his lines without scruple, and avowedly for the purposes of dramatic effect ; but in his other works he very rarely indulges in this liberty.

Johnson lays it down as a rule, that, in the midst of a

verse, a full stop ought not to follow an unaccented syllable; but that a stop which merely suspends the sense, may. He would object therefore to the rhythm of the following passage.

———— So sung  
 The glor|ious train | ascen|ding : He | through Heav'n |  
 That open'd wide her blazing portals, led  
 To God's eternal house direct the way. *P. L. 7. 573.*

But, amid all the license of the sectional stop, a rule like this is mere hypercriticism.

It is not easy to trace the steps, by which the sectional stop obtruded itself so generally into English verse. It is probable, that when the alliterative system, upon which our rhythms had been so long modelled, was done away with, much license prevailed as to the position of the middle pause; and consequently of the stop, that was coincident with it. When a more settled rhythm again brought it under rule, the ear had been too much accustomed to such new termination of the period, to take offence at the occasional violation of a law which had been so long neglected. When our dramas came into vogue, the necessities of the dialogue must also have had great influence. A single verse was sometimes parcelled out between three or four speakers, and frequently into as many sentences. Milton, therefore, had full range to gratify even *his* passion for variety. Had he used this liberty with more discretion, he would have laid the literature of his country under yet greater obligations.

A very favourite stop with Shakespeare was the one before the last accented syllable of the verse. Under his sanction it has become familiar, though opposed to every principle of accentual rhythm.

———— Rich conceit  
 Taught thee to make vast Neptune weep for aye  
 On | thy low grave| : on faults | forgiv|en. *Dead|*  
 Is noble Timon. *T. of A. 5. 4. 77.*

And so his peers upon this evidence  
 Have found | him guil|ty : of | high trea|son. *Much|*  
 He spoke and learnedly for life, &c. *H. VIII. 2. 1. 26.*



Loud | as from num| bers : with| out num| ber, *sweet* |  
 As from blest voices, uttering joy. *P. L. 3. 345.*

——— Th' humble shrub  
 And bush | with friz| zled hair| : implic| it. *Last* |  
 Rose, as in dance, the stately trees. *P. L. 7. 322.*

When there is a syllable between the stop and the last accent, it does not strike the ear so abruptly.

——— I such a fellow saw  
 Which made | me think | a man| : a worm| ; *my sin* |  
 Came then into my mind. *Lear, 4. 1. 34.*

——— Pipes that charm'd  
 Their pain| ful steps| : o'er | the burnt soil| , *and now* |.  
 Advanc'd in view they stand. *P. L. 1. 561.*

——— Thai for joy and pite gret  
 Quhen that thai with thar falow met  
 That thai | wend had| : bene dede| ; *for thi*  
 Thai welcummyt him mar hartfully. *Bruce, 2. 904 (3. 507).*

A stop much favoured by Milton, is that which occurs after the first syllable, when it takes the accent.

Harry to Harry shall, hot horse to horse,  
*Meet*, | and ne'er part| : till one | drop down | a corse| .  
*1 H. IV. 4. 1. 122.*

Though need make many poets, and some such  
 As art and nature have not better'd much,  
 Yet ours for want, hath not so lov'd the stage  
 As he dare serve th' ill customs of the age—  
 To make a child, now swaddled, to proceed  
*Man*,<sup>1</sup> | and then shoot | up : in | one beard | and weed |  
 Past threescore years.

*Ben Jonson. Prol. to Every Man in his Humour.*

Had you, some ages past, this race of glory  
*Run* | , with amaze| ment : we | should read | your sto| ry.  
*Waller's Panegyric, st. 37.*

——— Not to me returns  
*Day* | , or the sweet | approach| : of ev'n | or morn| .  
*P. L. 3. 41.*

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<sup>1</sup> This is the celebrated passage which contains, as is generally supposed, the sneer upon Shakespeare.

——— Death his dart  
*Shook* |, but delay'd | to strike | : though oft | iñvok'd |.  
*P. L. 11. 491.*

——— Hypocrites austere talk, . . .  
 Defaming as impure, what God declares  
*Pure* |, and commands | to some | : leaves free | to all |.  
*P. L. 4. 744.*

A stop, which is found in Chaucer, sometimes follows the second syllable when the verse begins with an accent.

——— They weren nothing idel,  
 The fomy stedes on the golden bridel  
*Gnaw* | ing, and fast | : the arm | urers | also |  
 With file and hammer priking to and fro.  
*Chau. The Knightes Tale ; C. T. 2507.*

The statue of Mars upon a carte stood  
*Arm* | ed, and look | ed grim | : as he | were wood |.  
*Chau. The Knightes Tale ; C. T. 2044.*

——— For the time I study  
*Vir* | tue, and that | part : of | philos | ophy |  
 Will I apply, that treats of happiness,  
 By virtue specially to be achieved.  
*Tam. of the Shrew, 1. 1. 17.*

——— Night with her will bring  
*Si* | lence, and sleep | : list | 'ning to thee | will watch |.  
*P. L. 7. 105.*

——— And now his heart  
 Distends with pride, and, hardening in his strength,  
*Glo* | ries ; for nev | er since | : crea | ted man |  
 Met such embodied force.  
*P. L. 1. 571.*

This stop, however, like the last, can never close a period.

When the first accent falls on the second syllable, it is very commonly followed by a stop.

It were, quod he, to thee no gret honour  
 For to be false, ne for to be traytour  
*To me* |, that am | : thy cous | in and | thy broth | er.  
*Chau. The Knightes Tale ; C. T. 1132.*

For it of honour and all virtue is  
*The root* |, and brings | forth : glo | rious flow'rs | of fame |.  
*F. Q. 4. prol. 2.*

With such an easy and unforc'd ascent,  
 That no stupendous precipice denies  
*Access* |, no hor|ror : turns | away | our eyes|. *Denham. Cooper's Hill. 42.*

Are there, among the females of our isle,  
*Such faults* | at which : | it is | a fault | to smile|?  
*There are* |. Vice once| : by mod|est na|ture chain'd|  
 And legal ties, expatiates unrestrained. *Pope's Sat. 7.<sup>1</sup>*

This stop was by no means rare in the verse of four accents.

Bot for pite, I trow, greting  
 Be na thing bot ane opynnyng  
*Off hart* |, that schaw | is : the ten | dernyss |  
 Off rewth that in it cloyt is. *The Bruce, 3. 531.*

Where he gives her many a rose  
 Sweeter than the breath, that blows  
*The leaves* |, grapes, ber|ries : of | the best|. *Fletcher. Faithful Shepherdess, 3. 1.*

Nor let the water rising high,  
 As thou wad'st in, make thee cry,  
*And sob* |, but ev|er : live | with me|,  
 And not a wave shall trouble thee. *Fletcher. Faith. Shep. 3. 1.*

Our poets sometimes place a stop after the third syllable,  
 but I think never happily.

The clotered blood for any leche-craft  
*Corrum|peth*, and |: is | in his bouk|e ylaft|. *Chau. The Knightes Tale; C. T. 2747.*

———— Of the blod real  
 Of *The|bes*, and |: of sus|tren two | yborne|. *Chau. The Knightes Tale; C. T. 1020.*

———— What in me is dark  
*Illu|mine*, what | is low |: raise | and support|. *P. L. 1. 22.*

———— How he can  
 Is *doubt|ful*, that | he nev|er : will|, is sure|. *P. L. 2. 154.*

<sup>1</sup> [These lines are not recognised in Abbott's "Concordance to Pope."—W. W. S.]

———— If I can be to thee  
 A po|et, thou|: Parnas|sus art | to me|. *Denham. Cooper's Hill, 7.*

Why then should I, encouraging the bad,  
 Turn reb|el, and|: run pop|ular|ly mad|? *Dryden. Abs. & Achit. 336.*

This stop is also found in verse of four accents.

The lord off Lorne wonnyt tharby,  
 That wes capitale ennymy  
 To the king for his emys sake  
 Jhon Com|yn; and|: thought | for to tak|  
 Wengeance. *The Bruce, 3. 1.*

Mortals, that would follow me,  
 Love Vir|tue, she|: alone | is free|. *Comus, 1018.*

Oft in glimm'ring bow'rs and glades  
 He met | her, and|: in se|cret shades|  
 Of woody Ida's inmost grove. *Il Penseroso, 27.*

When we see how nearly the freedom of our elder poets  
 approached to license, we may appreciate, in some measure,  
 the obligations we are under to the school of Pope and  
 Dryden. The attempts to revive the abuses, which they re-  
 formed, have happily, as yet, met with only partial success.

## BOOK II.

## CHAPTER I.

## ENGLISH RHYTHMS. THEIR ORIGIN.

OUR Anglo-Saxon poems consist of certain versicles, or, as we have hitherto termed them, *sections*, bound together in pairs by the laws of alliteration. In some few instances, of comparatively modern date, the bond of union is the final rime; but generally speaking, this rime is an addition to the alliteration, and not a substitute for it. In Icelandic poems we sometimes find a section occurring without its fellow; but I have never met with such a case in Anglo-Saxon verse, unless where there has evidently been a section missing.

For the most part these sections contain two or three accents, but some are found containing four or even five. The greater number of these longer sections may be divided into two parts, which generally fulfil all the conditions of an alliterative couplet; and in some manuscripts are actually found so divided. Whether *every* section of more than three accents be compound, may perhaps be matter of doubt. There are certainly many sections of four accents, which can have no middle pause, unless it fall in the midst of a word; for example,

Tha spræc | se of|ermod|a cyn|ing : the ær wæs engla scynost.

Then spake the haughty king, that erewhile was of angels sheenest.

*Cædmon. Gen. 338.*

and in the Icelandic verse of four accents, the middle pause is of rare occurrence. But this is not decisive as to their origin; for if a compound section were once admitted, we cannot expect it would still retain all the peculiarities of an alliterative couplet. As many of these sections are obviously compound, it would perhaps be safer to

refer them all to an origin, which is sufficient for the purpose, than to multiply the sources of our rhythms, without satisfactory authority.

Such verses and alliterative couplets, as contain a compound section, may well furnish matter for a distinct chapter. We shall, at present, consider those only, which are composed of simple sections.

We have seen, that two accented syllables may come together, if they have a pause between them. This pause, which has been termed the sectional pause, was admitted into the elementary versicle. The verses, however, or alliterative couplets, which contain the sectional pause, are of a character so peculiar, that they may be considered apart from the others, not only without injury to the general arrangement, but with much advantage to the clear understanding of the subject. We shall, at present, then consider only such verses, as are formed of two simple sections, and do not contain any sectional pause. Thus restricted, the elementary versicle or section is formed according to the following rules.

1. Each couple of adjacent accents must be separated by one or two syllables which are unaccented, but not by more than two.

2. No section can have more than three, or less than two accents.

3. No section can begin or end with more than two unaccented syllables.

These rules are directly at variance with those which Rask has given. According to him, all the syllables before that, which contains the alliteration, form merely "a complement," and take no accent. In the following section, to which Conybeare would have given five accents,

Æn | ne hæf | de he swa | swiþ | ne geworht | ne  
One had he so mighty wrought.

no accent falls on the first six<sup>1</sup> syllables, and the alliterative syllable *swiþ*<sup>1</sup> is the first which is accented! What

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<sup>1</sup> [For *six*, read *five*; for *swiþ*, read *swa*.—W. W. S.]

notion Rask attached to the word accent, I am at a loss to conjecture.<sup>1</sup>

When the section begins with an accent, we shall represent it by the figures 1, 2, 3, 4, accordingly as each couple of adjacent accents are separated by *one* unaccented syllable, or as the first, the second, or both couples is separated by *two* unaccented syllables.

When the section begins with one unaccented syllable, we shall, under like circumstances, designate it as 5, 6, 7, 8; and by 9, 10, 11, 12, when it begins with two unaccented syllables.

When the section ends with one or two unaccented syllables, we shall represent such ending by subjoining *l*, or *ll*, to the figure indicating such section; thus, 11, 2*ll*.

The section of two accents is capable but of two forms, when it begins abruptly, to wit, 1 and 2; but as these may be lengthened, and doubly lengthened, they produce six varieties. It is capable of six other varieties, when it begins with *one* unaccented syllable, and of the like number when it begins with *two*. Hence the whole number of possible varieties is 18.

The section of three accents may take all the twelve forms, and as these may be lengthened and doubly lengthened, its number of possible varieties is 36.

Our verses of two and three accents consist merely of the simple sections; but the verse of four accents is the representative of the short alliterative couplet, containing two sections, each of two accents. The number then of all the possible varieties is the product of eighteen multiplied into itself, or 324. In like manner, the verse of six accents is composed of two sections, each containing three; and the number of possible varieties is the product of thirty-six multiplied by itself, or 1296. The possible varieties of the verse with five accents is also 1296; to wit, 648 when the first section has two accents, and the like number when it has three.

<sup>1</sup> The attempt, which the same critic has made, to trace the early Gothic rhythms, and the Latin hexameter to a common source, appears to me equally fanciful. They that would follow Greek and Latin prosody to the fountain-head, must attack the *Sanscrit*.

Of this vast number, by far the larger portion has never yet been applied to the purposes of verse. Probably the rhythms, that would result from some of the combinations, would be too vague, and others too abrupt and uneven in their flow, to yield that pleasure which is always expected from measured language. But there are doubtless many combinations, as yet untried, which would satisfy the ear ; and it is matter of surprise, that at a time when novelty has been sought after with so much zeal, and often to the sacrifice of the highest principles, that a path so promising should have been adventured upon so seldom.

When the accents of a section are separated by two unaccented syllables, the rhythm has been called the *triple measure* ; and the *common measure*, when they are only separated by a single syllable. It was a favourite hypothesis of Mitford, that these two were the roots, from whence had sprung all the varied measures of our language ; and that they were immediately connected with the common and triple times in music. Were the opinion as sound as it is ingenious, we should find these metres standing out in more distinct and bolder relief, the deeper we penetrated into the antiquity of our rhythms. But, on the contrary, we find all our older poems exhibiting a rhythm of a composite and intermediate character ; and it is not till a period comparatively modern, that the common and triple measures disentangle themselves from the heap, and form, as it were, the two limits of our English rhythms. There can be no doubt—for we have contemporary evidence of the fact—that Anglo-Saxon verse was sung to the harp ; perhaps it may be granted, that the common and triple times in music were then well-known and familiar, but Mitford's error lay in assuming, that every syllable had its own peculiar note. The musical composer of the present day does not confine each syllable to a single note, and we have no reason for supposing that the Anglo-Saxon was more scrupulous. Had he been so, still it would have been impossible to have recited Anglo-Saxon verse with a musical accompaniment, whether in the common, or in the triple time.



## ENGLISH RHYTHMS. THEIR CHARACTER.

As there is always a tendency to dwell upon the accented syllable, *cæteris paribus*, a verse will be pronounced the more rapidly, the smaller the number of its accents. Hence the triple metre is more suited to light themes, and the common metre to those of a more stately character. With the masters of the art, the rhythm ever accommodates itself to the subject. We find it changing, as far as its range will allow, from the triple to the common measure, or from the common to the triple, as the subject changes from the lively to the sad, from motion to repose, or the contrary. The White Lady's song will afford us an example of the first change,

Mer | rily swim | we, the moon | shines bright |,  
 Down | ward we drift | through shad | ow and light |,  
 Un | der yon rock | the ed | dies sleep |  
 Calm | and si | lent, dark | and deep |.

W. Scott. *Monastery*, ch. 5.

and the song of "my delicate Ariel" of the second,

Where | the bee | sucks, there | suck I |,  
 In | a cows | lip's bell | I lie |;  
 There | I couch |, when owls | do cry |.  
 On | the bat's | back I | do fly |  
 Af | ter sum | mer mer | rily |.  
 Mer | rily, mer | rily, shall | I live now |,  
 Un | der the blos | som that hangs | on the bough |.

*Tempest*, 5. 1. 87.

If there be a *given* number of accents, this change of rhythm will, of course, bring with it an increased number of syllables. This probably misled Pope. He seems to have thought, that, to represent rapid motion, it was sufficient to crowd his verse with syllables; and for this purpose he even added to the number of his accents! Who can wonder at his failure?

Not so when swift Camilla scours the plain,  
 Flies | o'er th' unben | ding corn | : and skims | along | the main |.  
 Pope, *Essay on Criticism*, 372.

The character of the triple measure may, however, be best illustrated by an example, in which it has been misapplied. A worthy and a pious man describes the guilt and fears of the sinner, in the following jingle ;

My soul | is beset |  
With grief | and dismay | ;  
I owe | a vast debt |  
And noth | ing can pay | .

I must | go to pris | on,  
Unless | that dear Lord | ,  
Who died | and is ris | en,  
His mer | cy afford | .

With what a different rhythm does his "friend" clothe the subject !

My for | mer hopes | are fled |  
My ter | ror now | begins | ;  
I feel | alas | : that I | am dead |  
In tres | passes | and sins | .

Again, as the pronunciation of an accent requires some muscular exertion, a verse is generally the more energetic, the greater the number of its accents. Hence, other things being equal, a verse increases in energy, as its rhythm approaches the common measure, and a verse of the common measure is most energetic, when it begins and ends with an accented syllable. Hence in great measure the beauty of the following war-song ;

Quit | the plough | : the loom | , the mine | ,  
Quit | the joys | : the heart | entwine | ,  
Join | our broth | ers : on | the brine | ,  
Arm | , ye brave | , : or slav | ery | .

For | our homes | : our all | , our name | ,  
Blast | again | : the ty | rant's aim | ,  
Brit | ain's wrongs | : swift ven | geance claim | ,  
Rush | to arms | : or slav | ery | .

Again, what stern energy has Cowper breathed over the spirit of the warrior queen !

When | the Brit | ish : war | rior queen | ,  
Bleed | ing from | : the Ro | man rods | ,  
Sought | with an | : indig | nant mien | ,  
Coun | sel of | : her coun | try's Gods | , &c.

How different the rhythm from that, in which he introduces the heart-broken wretchedness of the slave,

Wide o | ver the trem | ulous sea |  
 The moon | shed her man | tle of light |,  
 And the breeze |, gently dy | ing away |,  
 Breath'd soft | on the bos | om of night |, &c.

Sometimes a verse of the triple metre begins with an accented syllable, or as we shall hereafter term it, begins *abruptly*. If it be short, so that the accented syllables be equal, or nearly equal, in number to the unaccented, it combines considerable force and energy with great rapidity of utterance, and is in some cases wonderfully effective.

Ro | bin Ro | ver  
 Said | to his crew |,  
 Up | with the black | flag  
 Down | with the blue |,

Fire | on the main | -top,  
 Fire | on the bow |,  
 Fire | on the gun | -deck,  
 Fire | down below |.

*W. Scott. Pirate, ch. 32.*

When the verse increases in length, the energy with which it begins soon dies away into feebleness; its rapidity, however, remains uninjured. Byron has chosen it, and not unhappily, to embody the tumultuous feelings and passions, and the sad forebodings, which hurried through the soul of Saul before his battle with the Philistine.

War | riors and chiefs |, should the shaft | or the sword |  
 Pierce | me in lead | ing the host | of the Lord |,  
 Heed | not the corse |, though a king's |, in your path |,  
 Bur | y your steel | in the bos | oms of Gath |.

Thou | who art bear | ing my buck | ler and bow |,  
 Should the sol | diers of Saul | look away | from the foe |,  
 Stretch | me that mo | ment in blood | at thy feet |,  
 Mine | be the doom | which they dared | not to meet |.

Fare | well to oth | ers, but nev | er we part |,  
 Heir | to my roy | alty, son | of my heart |,  
 Bright | is the di | adem, bound | less the sway |,  
 Or king | ly the death | which awaits | us to-day |.

*Hebrew Melodies.*

When a verse or section opens with an accent, followed by two unaccented syllables, the rapid utterance, immediately preceded by muscular exertion, produces in some cases a very striking effect. Force, unless counteracted, always produces motion; the mind, almost instinctively, links the two together; and such a flow of rhythm will frequently raise the idea, not merely of power, but of power in energetic action. Hence in great measure the beauty of the two examples last quoted.

The effect, however, of this particular rhythm is more felt in those metres, which approach nearer to the common measure, and so afford us the advantages of contrast.

———— The gates that now  
 Stood open wide : belch | ing outrage | ous flame |  
 Far into Chaos— *P. L. 10. 231.*

A sea of blood : gush'd | from the ga | ping wound |.  
*F. Q. 1. 8. 16.*

———— Then shall this mount  
 Of Paradise by might of waves be mov'd  
 Out | of his place | : push'd | by the horn | ed flood |.  
*P. L. 11. 829.*

———— So steers the prudent crane  
 Her annual voyage, borne on winds ; the air  
 Floats | as they pass | : fann'd | with unnum | ber'd plumes |.  
*P. L. 7. 430.*

In the common measure, this particular rhythm may also sometimes express, very happily, a sudden change of feeling or of situation.

———— I'll give thrice so much land  
 To any well-deserving friend—  
 But in the way of bargain, mark ye me  
 I'll cavil on the ninth part of a hair.  
 Are | the inden | tures drawn | ? : shall | we be gone | ?  
*1 H. IV. 3. 1. 137.*

O fairest of creation ! last and best  
 Of all God's works, creature in whom excell'd  
 Whatever can to sight or thought be form'd  
 Holy, divine, good, amiable, or sweet,  
 How | art thou lost | : how | on a sud | den lost | !  
*P. L. 9. 896.*

Occasionally, similar effects are produced by making

two unaccented syllables follow the *second* accent in a section ;

——— On a sudden open fly  
With | impet|uous recoil | : and jarring sound  
Th' infernal doors. P. L. 2. 879.

'Tis an unruly and a hard-mouth'd horse . . .  
'Twill no unskilful touch endure,  
But flings | wri|ter and read|er too | : that sits not sure.  
*Cowley, Pindaric Odes; The Resurrection.*

Again, sameness or similarity of rhythm may be made to answer several important purposes. It may be used to bring out more forcibly the points of a contrast ;

Ay | if thou wilt | say ay | : to my | request |,  
No | if thou wilt | say no | : to my | demand |.  
3 H. VI. 3. 2. 79.

Not sleep|ing, to | engross | : his i|dle bod|y,  
But pray|ing, to | enrich | : his watch|ful soul |.  
R. III. 3. 7. 76.

It will also aid in calling up in the mind the idea of succession ;

So man|y ho|urs : must | I tend | my flock |,  
So man|y ho|urs : must | I take | my rest |,  
So man|y ho|urs : must | I con|template |, &c.  
3 H. VI. 2. 5. 31.

O|ver hill | : o|ver dale |,  
Tho|ro bush | : tho|ro brier |,  
O|ver park | : o|ver pale |,  
Tho|ro flood | : tho|ro fire |,  
I do wander, &c. M. N. D. 2. 1. 2.

Milton often represented in this way, a *multitudinous* succession. He used, for the same purpose, a recurrence of similar sounds, and sometimes mere alliteration ;

An|guish and doubt | and fear | : and sor|row and pain |.  
P. L. 1. 558.

With ru|in up|on ru|in : rout | on rout |,  
Confu|sion worse | confoun|ded— P. L. 2. 995.

O'er shields | and helms | : and hel|med heads | he rode |.  
P. L. 6. 840.

Well have we speeded, and o'er hill and dale  
For|est and field | and flood | : tem|ples and tow'ers |,  
Cut shorter many a league. P. R. 3. 267.

The peculiar nature of Anglo-Saxon poetry allowed great scope for the recurrence of the same rhythm, and the ear of the Anglo-Saxon poet seems to have been most sensitively alive to its beauty. In those *parallelisms*, as Conybeare has termed them, which form so striking a feature of their lyric poems, we find the rhythm evidently formed upon the same model. It often rises and falls, in the two passages, with a flow and with pauses almost identical.

When the accent is strongly marked, the rhythm has a precision, which often gives it much force and spirit. Alliteration is sometimes used for this purpose;

On *last* | *leg* | *dun* : *lath* | *um* *theod* | *um*.

At foot<sup>1</sup> they laid on the loathed bands.

*The Brunanburgh War-Song, 22.*

——— Courage yields

No foot | to foe | : the flash | ing fi | er flies |

As from a forge.

*F. Q. 1. 2. 17.*

When, on the contrary, the rhythm rests on weak and secondary accents, it has that character of languor and feebleness, which Milton seems to have affected, whenever he had to describe an object of overwhelming dimension or difficulty.

Insu | pera | ble height | : of lof | tiest shade |,

Cedar and pine and fir—

*P. L. 4. 138.*

——— A dark

Illim | ita | ble o | cean : with | out bound |.

*P. L. 2. 891.*

——— Craggy cliff that overhung

Still | as it rose | : impos | sible | to climb |.

*P. L. 4. 547.*

Here | in perpet | ual : ag | ony | and pain |.

*P. L. 2. 861.*

So he | with dif | ficul | ty : and la | bour hard |

Mov'd on |, with dif | ficul | ty : and la | bour he |.

*P. L. 2. 1021.*

Cædmon and other Anglo-Saxon poets generally marked an emphatic word by means of the sectional pause. They generally prefaced in this way the name of the Deity.

<sup>1</sup> [Rather, "on their track."—W. W. S.]

Tha wæ | ron geset | te : wid | e and sid | e  
 Thurh | gewæld | —god | es : wul | dres bearn | um.  
 They were y-set, wide and far,  
 Through the power of God, for the sons of Glory.

*Cædmon*, 10.

Among later writers, we occasionally find the *middle* pause used for the like purposes;

With huge | force and | : in | supporta | ble main |.

*F. Q.* 1. 7. 11.<sup>1</sup>

———— Firm they might have stood  
 Yet fell | ; remem | ber and | : fear | to transgress |.

*P. L.* 6. 911.

#### ENGLISH RHYTHMS. THEIR HISTORY.

It may be doubted, whether the earliest rhythms, that were known to our Race, were accentual or temporal. We have poems written by Englishmen as early as the seventh century, and others which were probably written in the fourth; and in none of these are found the slightest traces of a temporal rhythm. But we must remember, that the Goths were a people very differently situated from those, which regulated their metres by the laws of quantity. The Hindoos, Greeks, and Latins, were *settled* races; and were not till a late period in their history, subject to any of those convulsions, which change the character and fortunes of a people. The other tribes, which formed the Indo-European family—the Celts, the Goths, the Slaves—appear almost from the first as *migratory* hordes; and traversed one-fourth of the earth's circuit as fugitives or invaders. It is possible, that these fearful changes may have wrought the same revolution in their poetry, that their own invasions seem afterwards to have effected in the prosodial systems of Greece and Rome.

Again, there can be little doubt, that the Greek and Latin metres were mere varieties of the Sanscrit; and that

<sup>1</sup> [But perhaps the accent was on the *second* syllable of *insupportable*; see p. 95, note.—W. W. S.]

the three races derived their rhythms from one common source. Now the early Gothic dialects, in their *syntax* and their *accidence*, approach the Sanscrit full as nearly as do the Greek and Latin; it is probable, therefore, that they may at one time have no less resembled the Sanscrit in their *prosody*.

As, however, no temporal rhythms are to be found in our literature, this is an inquiry rather curious than useful. A more important question is—what are the forms in which *accentual* rhythm made its first appearance amongst us.

If the Song of the Traveller were composed in the fifth century, there must have been great variety of rhythm even at that early period; as there certainly was in the seventh century, when Cædmon wrote. It is, however, probable, that the earliest rhythms were of a simpler and more uniform character. The short verses, which are found in the Anglo-Saxon war-songs, have at once a character of simplicity, and one which shows most strikingly the advantages of the initial rime or alliteration. Most of the alliterative couplets have only four accents—very few indeed have so many as six. The second section, almost invariably, begins with an alliterative syllable, and in most cases the first section also. Hence the flow of the rhythm is abrupt and forcible; or, to use language more familiar than correct, it is generally *trochaic* or *dactylic*.

The abrupt commencement of the second section was doubtless the chief reason, why the middle pause was so important in Anglo-Saxon poetry. The sharp and sudden division between the two sections was well fitted for the termination of a period; and we accordingly find more sentences ending in the middle, than at the end of a couplet. This is a very striking peculiarity of Anglo-Saxon verse.

When writing on more serious subjects, the Anglo-Saxon poet generally lengthened his rhythms, and frequently employed couplets of six or even seven accents. The sections also more commonly began with unaccented syllables; but the middle pause still retained its importance.



When a section contained three or more accents, it generally approached more nearly to the common measure, than to the triple; but that the flow of the triple measure was neither unknown nor altogether disfavoured, is clear from several passages in the Song of the Traveller. In most cases, however, the rhythm was not sufficiently continuous, to give it that marked and peculiar character which is observable—and sometimes very obtrusively so—in modern versification.

The authority of Bede seems to be decisive<sup>1</sup> against Anglo-Saxon *metre*, meaning by that word any law, which confines the rhythm within *narrow* bounds, either as to the number of syllables or of accents. Our scholars were probably the first to bend the neck to the yoke; and the ecclesiastical chants seem to have been the chief means of spreading it among the people.

Accentual rhythms with four accents were in frequent use, among our latinists, at a very early period; but were not adopted into our vernacular poetry till the twelfth century. The influence of this new metre was very widely felt, even in our alliterative poetry. One of the distinctions between the rhythm of Layamon and of his Anglo-Saxon predecessors, is the great number of riming couplets formed upon this model.

But the accentual verse of fifteen syllables, formed after the *Tetrameter Iambic Catalectic*, and which overspread the Greek and Latin churches in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, worked the *greatest* changes in our English rhythms. The long verses of six or seven accents, in which were written the Lives of the Saints, and so many other works of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, were its direct descendants; and, through these, we may connect it with our psalm metres, and other varieties of what are sometimes called our Lyric Measures. Their influence also on our alliterative poetry produced, in the

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<sup>1</sup> The passage in Bede here referred to is for several reasons obscure; but, on further consideration, I would say, that it cannot possibly bear the inference which is here drawn from it.

thirteenth century, that variety, which we have designated as the Old English alliterative metre. In this metre, the verses had seldom less than six, and generally seven accents, of which the first section contained four ; whereas, in Anglo-Saxon verse, the section which contained the four accents was generally the second. The middle pause too, was invariably subordinate to the final. The rhythm inclined very generally to the triple measure. In this metre were written some of our best, though least known, romances, and some of our finest satires. It lingered in Scotland, and in the north of England, till the reign of Elizabeth.

After alliteration, as a system, had been lost, some writers wished to unite the utmost license of alliterative rhythm with the forms of a later and more artificial system. Hence, we had lines of four, five, or six accents, and which contained every variety of rhythmical flow, arranged in staves, frequently of the most complex structure. I have borrowed a term used by a royal critic, and called these slovenly verses the "tumbling" metre. Skelton and many of his contemporaries patronised it.

The short and riming couplets of four, five, or six accents, in which some of our earlier romances were written—King Horn, for example—seem to be the lineal descendants of the riming Anglo-Saxon poems. They differ from their predecessors, merely in dropping the alliteration, and confining the rime within narrower limits; the rhythm is but slightly changed. The same short verses are found, strongly affected by foreign influences, in the *lays* and *virelays* of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries; and there can be little doubt that the "short measures" of Skelton, "pleasing only the popular eare," which Puttenham so strongly inveighs against, were handed down by tradition, as the genuine representatives of the same venerable stock.

Our heroic verse, as it has been called of late, was formerly known by the more homely appellation of *riding rime*. It was familiarly used by our countrymen, in their French poems, as early as the 12th century; but Hampole,

or whoever was the author of the *Pricke of Conscience*, appears to have been the first who wrote in it any English poem of consequence.

Chaucer strictly confined this rhythm to five accents, but certainly allowed himself great freedom in the number of his syllables. His rhythm, however, always approaches that of the common measure, and is widely different from the impudent license of the tumbling metre. The writers of Elizabeth's reign, though they introduced the Alexandrine, tied the verse of five accents to greater precision; and in this they were followed by Milton. The school of Dryden and Pope narrowed its rhythm yet more; and as they left it, it has since continued.

This slight notice may prepare the reader for the use of certain terms, which it has been found convenient to employ in the following chapters. Before, however, we proceed, I would call his attention to a subject, very nearly connected with the one before us, and upon which, as it seems to me, very serious mistakes have prevailed of late years.

#### ELISION.

From the fourteenth to the sixteenth century, the pronunciation of our language varied much in different countries. In some the shorter vowels were very generally elided, in others they were scrupulously preserved. Some writers always pronounced the following words with two syllables, *enmye*, *destnye*, *victry*, *counslour*, &c., and wrote them accordingly; while others, who sometimes gave them an additional syllable, wrote them either with a mark of elision *en'my*, or in full *enemy*. The right to drop a syllable is claimed by our modern poets, in many hundreds of instances; but whether the spelling should warn the reader of their intention to exercise such right, has been doubted.

As this is, in some degree, a question of orthography, which is so much a matter of convention, we will first inquire what has hitherto been the prevailing usage.

During the reign of Elizabeth, we find the orthography far more generally accommodated to the rhythm in poems

of a strict and obvious metre, than in those where the rhythm was loose—in the poems of Churchyard, Gascoigne, and other writers of the ballet-stanza, than in the works of our dramatists. We may conclude, therefore, that the printers were at that time ready to assist, and, as far as their knowledge went, actually did assist the reader in the scansion of the verse.

Shakespeare, it is well known, never printed his works; the first folio, now, in more than one sense, *dear* to the collector, was edited by the players. We cannot expect that the orthography would be more attended to than the sense, which is often obscure and even unintelligible. We may find the same word spelt two and even three different ways in the same page; the contracted word is often found written at full length, and the word which has its full quota of syllables, is found contracted. But, *on the whole*, there is evidently a wish to spell according to the pronunciation.

The *Paradise Lost* was printed during the blindness of Milton, under the supervision of his nephew. Some classes of words had their contractions indicated, and others not; for instance, the elision of the final vowel is noticed in the article, but not in other words. Bentley observes that Milton “in thousands of places melts down the vowel at the end of a word, if the following word begins with a vowel. This poetical liberty he took from the Greeks and Latins;”<sup>1</sup> but he followed not the former, who strike the vowels quite out of the text, but the latter, who retain them in the line, though they are absorbed in the speaking.” Therefore to help “such readers as know not, or not readily know where such elision is to take place,” he marks such vowels with an apostrophe. He seems also to have distinguished between words, that regularly elided the short vowel, and those, which did so only occasionally, writing *weltring* without an apostrophe, but *cong’ror* with one. Milton’s next editor, Newton, somewhat varied the orthography. He warns the reader of the elision of the short vowel after the long one, as in

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<sup>1</sup> Bentley was a Greek scholar, but certainly *not* an English one; see p. 69.

*riot, being, &c.*, and wrote *prison, reason*, instead of Bentley's *pris'n* and *reas'n*. Later editors "have endeavoured to deserve well of their country," by clearing Milton's page of these deformities. The merit of the task cannot well be *less* than its difficulty.

It would not be difficult to assign a motive for the strong feeling, that has prevailed during the last half century, against the old and "barbarous" orthography. Though Tyrwhitt objected to Urry's mode of marking the final *e* when vocal, *swetè, halvè, &c.*, as "an innovation in orthography," and "apt to mislead the ignorant reader, for whom it only could be intended," he must have been conscious, that upon this subject (perhaps the most difficult that can be submitted to an English scholar) no reader could be more ignorant than himself. But there was little fear of criticism, and who would *volunteer* a confession of ignorance? Even Gifford, whose stern good sense, and austere honesty might, one would have thought, have stemm'd the current, boasts of rescuing Jonson from "the uncouth and antiquated garb of his age;"<sup>1</sup> and when editing Massinger, prides himself upon the "removal of such barbarous contractions, as *conq'ring, ad'mant, ranc'rous, ign'rant, &c.*" Yet it would be easy to point out many hundreds of verses, the right reading of which, owing to these "silent reforms," has ever since been a mystery to the general reader; and *some*, which I suspect, it would have puzzled the editor himself to have scanned correctly.

Those who object to the "syncopes and apocopes," belong chiefly to two classes. In the first place, there are some, who presume upon the reader's knowledge, and think with Tyrwhitt, that he who knows not where to contract the *es* and the *ed*, that is, the terminations of the plural and of the perfect, "had better not trouble his head

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<sup>1</sup> He proceeds with strange inconsistency, and a singular forgetfulness of what was the real usage of the time, to observe "The barbarous contractions therefore, the syncopes and apocopes which deformed the old folios (for the quartos are remarkably free from them) have been regulated, and the appearance of the poet's page assimilated in a great degree to *that of his contemporaries*, who spoke and wrote the same language as himself."

about the versification of Chaucer." There are others, who think the elision or the pronunciation of the vowel a matter of indifference, and that if the ear be not offended by any "cacophony," the rhythm must be satisfied.

I would submit to the first of these classes, the three following lines, which were once brought forward to show that our heroic verse would admit three syllables, in any one of the three first feet ;

Óminous | conjecture on the whole success.

P. L. 2. 123.

A pil|lar of státe | deep on his front engraven.

P. L. 2. 302.

Celestial spir|its in bón|dage nor the abyss.

P. L. 1. 658.

and also the two lines, which Bishop Newton quotes, to prove that our heroic verse would admit either a "dactyle" or an "anapæst ;"<sup>1</sup>

Hurl'd headlong flaming from th' èthèréal sky.

P. L. 1. 45.

Mýriáds though bright ! if he whom mutual league—

P. L. 1. 87.

Now, if the most admired of Milton's editors were ignorant of the real number of syllables contained in the words, *ethereal* and *myriads* ; if a critic of Tyrwhitt's reputation did not know that *ominous*, *pillar*, and *spirit* were to be pronounced *om'nous*, *pill'r*, and *sp'rit* ; can we fairly expect such knowledge to flash, as it were by intuition, upon the uninstructed reader ?

Of late years, however, the *fashionable* opinion has been, that in such cases the vowel may be pronounced without injury to the rhythm. Thelwall discovered in Milton "an *appogiatura*, or syllable more than is counted in the bar," and was of opinion that such syllables "constitute an essential part of the expressive harmony of the

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<sup>1</sup> The reader need hardly be told how confused are the Editor's notions upon the subject of *accent* and *quantity*.

best writers, and should never in typography or utterance be superseded by the barbarous expedient of elision." He marks them with the short quantity, and reads the following verses one with twelve, and the other with thirteen syllables !

Cov'ring the beach, and black'ning all the strand. *Dryden.*

Ungrateful off'ring to thë immortal pow'rs. *Pope.*

But there are men, entitled to our respect, whose writings, to a certain extent, have countenanced this error. Both Wordsworth and Coleridge use certain words, as though they still contained the same number of syllables, as in the time of Shakespeare. Thus they make *delicate* a dissyllable, yet would certainly shrink from pronouncing it *del'cate*. The associations connected with this Shakespearian dissyllable were doubtless the motive ; but they are purchased much too dearly if the rhythm be sacrificed. The pettiness of the delinquency cannot be pleaded ; for if a short and "evanescent" syllable may be obtruded, so may also a long one. )

That the poets and critics of Elizabeth's reign did not entertain the same opinion on this subject, as their editors, is certain. "This poetical license," Gascoigne observes, "is a shrewde fellow, and covereth many faults in a verse, it maketh wordes longer, shorter, of mo syllables, of fewer . . . and to conclude, it turkeneth all things at pleasure ; for example . . . *orecome* for *overcome*, *tane* for *taken*, *power* for *pouwe*, *heaven* for *heavn*, &c." Gabriel Harvey, after entering his protest against the use of *heavn*, *seavn*, *eleavn*, *evn*, *diavl*, &c., as dissyllables, the same being contrary to the received pronunciation of the day, proceeds, "Marry, I confesse, some wordes we have indeed, as *fayer* either for beautiful or for a marte, *ayer* both pro aere and pro hærede, for we say not *heire*, but plaine *aire*<sup>1</sup> for him to,

<sup>1</sup> The old English *cyr* a son, answering to the Dutch *oir* an offspring, was first spelt with an *h*, during the 16th century ; the pedantry of the age, of course, seeing nothing but a Latin original, *heres*. In like manner, our modern man of travel writes *suit* with an *e*, *suite* ; though the word has formed part of our vulgar tongue since the days of Alfred. [See my note on this.—W. W. S.]

(or else Scoggins's *aier* were a poor jest), whiche are commonly and maye indifferently be used either wayes. For you shall as well and as ordinarily heare *fayer* as *faire*, and *aier* as *aire*, and both alike, not only of dyvers and sundrie persons, but often of the very same; otherwhiles using the one, otherwyles using the other; and so *died* or *dyde*, *spied* or *spide*, *tryed* or *tryde*, *fyer* or *fyre*, *myer* or *myre*, with an infinite number of the same sorte, sometime monosyllaba, sometime polysyllaba." He also objected to some of Spenser's "trimetra" (that is, English verses written on the model of the Trimeter Iambic) that they had a foot too many, unless it were "sawed off with a payre of syncopes, and then should the orthographie have testified so muche; and instead of *heavenli virginale*, you should have written *heavni virgnals*, and again, *virgnals* againe in the ninth, and should have made a curtoll of *immericito* in the laste, &c." Hence it is clear that the "barbarous contractions" so much inveighed against, are not chargeable upon the ignorance of the printer; they form part of a system of orthography, deliberately adopted by men of education, to suit a particular state of our language; and it seems to be as absurd, to exchange these peculiarities of spelling for those of modern date, as it would be to pare down the language of Homer to the *Atticism* of the Tragedians. The blunders of the transcriber and printer consisted chiefly in *misapplying* the orthography of the day; it is the duty of an editor (and sometimes *not* an easy duty) to correct these blunders, and not to shrink from the responsibility, under the pretence of purifying the text. The works of Burns have the spelling accommodated to the rhythm; why not those of Shakespeare and his contemporaries?

#### ARRANGEMENT OF THE SUBJECT.

In the next chapter we shall consider those verses which consist of a single section; or, in other words, our verses of two and three accents. The third chapter will be devoted to the verse of four accents; the fourth to such verses of five accents, as contain two in the first section; and the



fifth to such verses as contain three. The sixth chapter will discuss the verse of six accents. In the seventh we shall consider those verses which contain a compound section; and in the last, those which admit the sectional pause.

## CHAPTER II.

## VERSES CONSISTING OF A SINGLE SECTION.

IN certain staves, we meet with lines containing only *one* accent. These in the 13th and 14th centuries seldom contained more than one or, at most, two syllables; and seem to have been known by the expressive name of *bobs*, that is pendants. They will be noticed in the last book; for in no point of view can they be considered as verses. The same may be said of the lines containing one accent and *three* syllables, which some of our modern poets have patronized ;

Hearts beat|ing  
At meet|ing,  
Tears start|ing  
At part|ing.

It would be absurd to call these lines verses. Two of them, if joined together, would form the section 6 l. with the double rime—a riming section, which, for ages has been familiar to our poetry. They ought to have been written accordingly.

## VERSE OF TWO ACCENTS.

The section 1. of two accents is rarely met with as an independent verse. The cause was evidently its shortness. Shakespeare, however, has adopted it into that peculiar rhythm, in which are expressed the wants and wishes of his *fairy-land*. This rhythm consists of abrupt verses of two, three, or four accents; it belongs to the common measure, and abounds in the sectional pause. Under Shakespeare's sanction, it has become classical, and must now be considered as the *fairy dialect* of English literature.

On | the ground |  
 Sleep sound,  
 I'll | apply |  
 To | your eye |,  
 Gentle lover, remedy.  
 When | thou wak'st |,  
 Thou tak'st  
 True | delight |  
 In | the sight |  
 Of thy former lady's eye.

*M. N. D. 3. 2. 448.*

The section 1 *l.* was common in those short rhythms, which abounded in the 16th century under the patronage of Skelton, Drayton, and others their contemporaries. Campion actually wrote a madrigal in this measure, which he called the Anacreontic ;

Fol | lowe, fol | lowe,  
 though | with mis | chiefe  
 arm'd | like whirle | -wind  
 now | she flies | thee ;  
 time | can con | quer  
 loves | unkind | nes ;  
 love | can al | ter  
 times | disgrac | es ;  
 till | death faint | not  
 then, | but fol | lowe.

2.

Could | I catch | that  
 nimb | le tray | ter,  
 skorn | full Law | ra,  
 swift | -foote Law | ra,  
 soone | then would | I  
 seeke | avenge | ment ;  
 what's | th' avenge | ment ?  
 ev'n | submis | ly  
 pros | trate then | to  
 beg | for mer | cy.

Sections 2. 2 *l.* are not uncommon ;

The steel we touch,  
 Forc'd ne'er so much,  
 Yet still removes  
 To that it loves,

Till there it stays ;  
 So | to your praise |,  
 I turn ever ;  
 And though never  
 From you moving,  
 Hap|py so lov|ing.     *Drayton. An Amouret.*

But the Section 5. was, as might have been expected,  
 the chief staple of these short rhythms ;

Most good, | most fair, |  
 Or things | as rare |     .  
 To call | you's lost | ;  
 For all | the cost |  
 Words can bestow  
 So poor | ly show |  
 Upon | your praise |,  
 That all | the ways |     .  
 Sense hath, | come short |.     *Drayton. The same.*

Section 6. was sometimes met with ;

## 1.

Pleasure it ys  
 To here I-wys  
 The birds syngyng!  
 The dere | in the dale |,  
 The shepe | in the vale |,  
 The corne spryngyng.

## 2.

Gods purveyance  
 For sustenance,  
 It is for man ! &c.

*Ballet, written about 1500.*

## VERSE OF THREE ACCENTS.

The Sections 1. and 1 l. with three accents are frequently met with. There is one kind of metre in which these verses occur alternately. It has been revived by Moore ;

Fill the bumper fair,  
 Ev'ry drop we sprinkle,  
 O'er the brow of Care,  
 Smooths away a wrinkle, &c.

The Section 2. is not unfrequently mixed up with the other Sections of three accents;

This while we are abroad,  
 Shall | we not touch | our lyre | ?  
 Shall | we not sing | an ode | ?  
 Shall that holy fire,  
 In us that strongly glow'd,  
 In this cold air expire ?

*Drayton. An Ode written in the Peak.*

Milton has given us *one* specimen of 3 l.

Sabrina fair  
 Lis | ten where | thou art sit | ting  
 Under the glassy, cool, translucent wave,  
 In twisted braids of lilies knitting  
 The loose train of thy amber-dropping hair.

*Comus, 859.*

The Sections 5. and 5 l. have been alternated; they form a very pleasing metre;

1.

Ere God | had built | the moun | tains,  
 Or rais'd | the fruit | ful hills |,  
 Before | he fill'd | the foun | tains,  
 That feed | the run | ning rills |,  
 In me | from ev | er las | ting  
 The won | derful | I AM  
 Found pleas | ures nev | er wast | ing,  
 And Wis | dom is | my name |.

2.

When, like | a tent | to dwell | in,  
 He spread | the skies | abroad |,  
 And swath'd | about | the swel | ling  
 Of o | cean's migh | ty flood |,  
 He wrought | by weight | and meas | ure,  
 And I | was with | him then |,  
 Myself | the Fa | ther's pleas | ure,  
 And mine | the sons | of men |.

*Cowper. Pron. 8.*

The Section 5 l. was much favoured during the 16th century. We have songs, some of good length, entirely composed of it, though, generally speaking, it occurred at intervals.

Section 9. is of constant occurrence in our old ballads and popular songs ;

Over Ottercap hill they cam in,  
And so dowyn | by Rod | clyffe cragge |,  
Upon Grene Leyton they lighted down,  
Styrande many a stagge. *Battle of Otterburn, st. 3.*

Burns often used it, as in his humourous song on John Barleycorn ;

They 've ta'en a weapon, long and sharp,  
An' cut him by the knee,  
Then tied him fast upon a cart  
Like a rogue | for for | gerie | ——  
'T will make a man forget his woe,  
'T will heighten all his joy,  
'T will make the widow's heart to sing  
Tho' the tear | were in | her eye |.

This verse has very little to recommend it.

## CHAPTER III.

## VERSE OF FOUR ACCENTS.

IN the present chapter, we shall consider our verses of four accents as made up of two sections, and range them according to the order of the combinations.

This is not an artificial law, invented for the mere purposes of arrangement; it is the model upon which the great majority of these verses have been actually formed. The construction of the Anglo-Saxon couplet of four accents is rendered obvious to the eye, by the use of the rhythmical dot; and that the verse or couplet of four accents was formed in the same manner as late as the thirteenth century, is clear from Layamon, and other poets of that period. That the adoption of foreign metre brought with it into our language many verses, which neither had, nor were intended to have, the middle pause, may perhaps be granted; but that our poetry quickly worked itself clear from such admixture is no less certain. The critics of Elizabeth's reign insist upon the middle pause almost unanimously. They differed sometimes as to its position, and did not entertain the clearest notions as to its nature or its origin; but all seem to have acknowledged it as a necessary adjunct of English verse.

Gascoigne tells us, there are "certain pauses or restes in a verse, whiche may be called Ceasures, whereof I woulde be lothe to stande long, since it is at discretion of the wryter, and they have bene first devised (as should seeme) by the musicians; but yet thus much I will adventure to wryte, that in a verse of eight sillables the pause will stand best in the middest, &c." In like manner, Sir Philip Sidney represents English verse, unlike the Italian or Spanish, as "never almost" failing of the "cæsura or breathing place; "

and King James has urged its importance on his reader, and with reasoning that good sense might adopt even at the present day. "Remember also to make a section in the middes of everie lyne, quethir the line be long or short." If the verse be of twelve or fourteen syllables, the section ought specially to be "othir a monosyllabe, or the hinmost syllabe of a word, always being lang," for if it be "the first syllabe of a polysyllabe, the music schall make zou sa to rest in the middes of that word, as it schall cut the ane half of the word fra the uther, and sa shall mak it seme twa different wordis, that is bot ane." He thinks indeed the same caution not necessary in the shorter lines, because "the musique makes no rest in the middes of thame;" but would have "the section in them kythe something longer nor any uther feit in that line, except the second and the last." His mistake, in considering the middle pause *merely* as a rest for music, led him to confine his rule thus narrowly. The verse of four accents he divided like Gascoigne.

It is clear, I think, that in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the middle pause was looked upon as essential; and that the verse of four accents was still formed of two sections, as in the Anglo-Saxon period. When we meet with such verses as the following;

Guiding the fiery :-wheeled throne  
The cherub Con : temptation.

*Il Penseroso, 53.*

I do not see how we can treat them otherwise than as false rhythm; or if the middle pause be disowned, at least require that they should not intrude among verses of a different character and origin. If the poet make no account of the pause, let him be consistent, and reject its aid altogether. If he prefer the rhythm of the foreigner, let him show his ingenuity in a *correct* imitation, and not fall back upon our English verse, when his skill is exhausted. Both foreign and English rhythm are injured, by being jumbled together in this slovenly and inartificial manner.

In ranging our verses of four accents, we shall take the different sections in their order, and place under each the verses, of which such section forms the commencement.



We shall then take the section lengthened and doubly lengthened. The same order will regulate the second sections of each verse. Thus we shall begin with the verses 1 : 1, 1 : 1 l, 1 : 1 ll; 1 : 2, 1 : 2 l, 1 : 2 ll, &c., and then proceed to 2 : 1, 2 : 1 l, 2 : 1 ll; 2 : 2, 2 : 2 l, 2 : 2 ll, &c.

#### VERSES BEGINNING WITH SECTION 1.

The verse 1 : 1. is met with in our old romances; and occurs so often in the fairy dialect of the sixteenth century, as to form one of its most characteristic features. It is now obsolete, but was occasionally used during the last century.

He bethought him nedely . . . .  
How | he myght | : veng | ed be |  
On that lady fayre and fre.

*The Squyr of low degre, 293 ; ed. Ritson.*

Where the place ? upon the heath,  
There | to meet | : with | Macbeth |. *Macbeth, 1. 1. 6.*

O | ver hill | : o | ver dale |,  
Tho | ro bush | : tho | ro brier |,  
O | ver park | : o | ver pale |,  
Tho | ro flood | : tho | ro fire |,  
I do wander ev'ry where,  
Swifter than the moon's sphere. *M. N. D. 2. 1. 2.*

Yet | but three | : come | one more |,  
Two of both kinds makes up four.  
Here | she comes | : curst | and sad | :  
Cupid is a knavish lad,  
Thus to make poor females sad. *M. N. D. 3. 2. 438.*

Here be berries for a queen,  
Some | be red | : some | be green |. *Fletcher's F. Sh. 1. 1.*

I | must go | : I | must run |,  
Swifter than the fiery sun. *Id. F. Sh. 1. 1.*

There | I stop | : fly | away |  
Ev'ry thing, that loves the day ;  
Truth | that hath | : but | one face |,  
Thus I charm thee from this place. *Id. F. Sh. 3. 1.*

Some | times swift | : some | times slow |  
Wave succeeding wave they go,  
A various journey to the deep,  
Like human life, to endless sleep. *Dyer's Grongar Hill.*

In the last extract the verse rather pleases than offends, for the dreaminess of the reflection suits well with its associations. Indeed, the poet's whole landscape is mere fairy-land. In the following example, I am by no means sure that the line ought not to be read with *three* accents. But when we see the pronoun *me* accented in the seventh line; and remember the light imaginative style of the poetry; and above all, how deeply Milton had drunk in the rhythms of Fletcher; the balance will probably turn in favour of the four accents.

O'er the smooth enamell'd green,  
Where no print of step hath been,  
Fol|low me| : as | I sing|,  
And touch the warbled string,  
Under the shady roof  
Of branching elm star-proof,  
Follow me ;

I will bring you where she sits, &c.

*Arcades*, 84.

This is the only instance of the rhythm in Milton.

The verse 1 : 1. is rarely found lengthened; and then almost always in our old romances.

Welcum ertou, king Arthoure  
Of al this werld thou beres the flowr  
Lo|rd<sup>1</sup> Kyng| : of | all kyng|es,  
And blessed be he that the brynges.

*Iwaine and Gawin*, 1409.

1 : 2. and 1 : 2 l. are rare.

See the day begins to break,  
And | the light| : shoots | like a streak |  
Of subtle fire.

*Fletcher. Fa. Sheph.* 4. 4.

Let | them sleep| : let | them sleep on |  
Till this stormy night be gone,  
And th' eternal morrow dawn.

*Crashaw. Epitaph upon a Husband and Wife.*

See his wound again is burst,  
Keep | him near| : here | in the wood |,  
Till I have stopp'd these streams of blood.

*Fletcher. Fa. Sheph.* 5. 2.

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<sup>1</sup> *Lord* is here a dissyllable, M.E. *laverd*, A.S. *hláford*. [But *alle*, being plural, is also dissyllabic, and the line should run thus: *Læ|verd kyng| : of al|le kyng|es*.—W. W. S.]

Bar|ons, knights| : squiers | one and alle|.

*Skelton's Elegy on Northumberlande, 92.*

Dior|-boren| : dys|iges folc|es. *Alfred. Met. 26, 52.*

In quoting from Anglo-Saxon poems, translated in the third book, no English version will be given. To make such version intelligible, it would often be necessary to quote long passages.

1 : 5. has been used in English poetry, for the last six centuries.

Haste | thee nymph| : and bring | with thee|

Jest | and youth|ful jol|lity|,

Quips | and cranks| : and wan|ton wiles|,

Nods | and becks| : and wreath|ed smiles|,

Such | as hang| : on Heb|e's cheek|, &c. *L' Allegro, 25.*

Les|ser than| : Macbeth | and great|er. *Macbeth, 1. 3.*

Look | not thou| : on beau|ty's charm|ing,

Sit | thou still| : when kings | are arm|ing,

Taste | not when| : the wine|-cup glis|tens,

Speak | not when| : the peo|ple lis|tens,

Stop | thine ear| : against | the sing|er,

From the red gold keep thy finger,

Vacant heart, and hand, and eye,

Easy live, and quiet die.

*Scott. Bride of Lammermoor, ch. 3.*

1 : 9. is occasionally found in our ballads and old romances.

The queyne duelt thus in Kildromy,

And | the king| : and his cum|pany|

Wandryt emang the hey mountanis. *The Bruce, 3. 367.*

As the section 1. is rare in Anglo-Saxon verse, we have as yet met with few alliterative couplets; but many are found beginning with the lengthened section 1 l.

#### VERSES BEGINNING WITH SECTION 1 l.

1 l : 1. has for ages, been well-known to our poetry; when lengthened it forms one of the commonest couplets in our Anglo-Saxon poems.

And | the milk | maid : sing|eth blithe|

And | the mow|er : whets | his scythe|. *L' Allegro, 65.*

The Anglo-Saxon couplets will be classed according to the alliteration. The number, ranged under each head, will give the reader some notion of the comparative frequency of their occurrence in Anglo-Saxon verse ;

hel | le heaf | as : heard | e nith | as. *Cædmon, Gen. 38.*

wæ | leas wer | od : wal | dend sen | de. *Cædmon, Gen. 67.*

græs | ungren | e : gar | secg theah | te. *Cædmon, Gen. 117.*

Scir | um scim | an : scip | pend ur | e. *Cædmon, Gen. 137.*

hord | and ham | as : het | tend crun | gon.  
*Brunanburgh War-song, 10.*

wæg | liden | dum : wæ | tres bro | gan. *Cædmon, Gen. 1395.*

eorth | an tud | dor : eall | acwel | de. *Cædmon, Gen. 1402.*

heaf | od eal | ra : heah | gesceaf | ta. *Cædmon, Gen. 4.*

lif | es bryt | ta : leoht | wæs sær | est. *Cædmon, Gen. 129.*

form | an sith | e : fyl | de hel | le. *Cædmon, Gen. 319.*

Crec | a ric | es : cuth | wæs wid | e. *Alfred, Met. 26. 11.*

Crec | a drih | ten : camp | sted sec | an. *Alfred, Met. 26. 14.*

For | auld stor | ys : that | men red | ys,  
Representis to thaim the dedys  
Of stalwart folk. *The Bruce, l. 17.*

Earth's increase, foison plenty,  
Barns | and garn | ers : nev | er emp | ty,  
Vines | with clus | tring : bunch | es grow | ing,  
Plants | with good | ly : bur | then bow | ing.  
Spring | come to | you : at | the far | thest,  
In | the ver | y : end | of har | vest.  
Scarcity and want shall shun you,  
Cer | es' bles | sing : so | is on | you. *Tempest, 4. l. 110.*

1 l : 2. is found in Anglo-Saxon, but very rarely in English ;

yth | with oth | re : ut | feor adraf |. *Alf. Met. 26. 30.*

yth | a wræc | on : an | leasra feorh |. *Cæd. Gen. 1385.*

for | mid fearm | e : fæ | e ne mos | ton. *Cæd. Gen. 1394.*

ham | and heah | setl : heof | ona ric | es. *Cæd. Gen. 33.*

wul | dres eth | el : wroht | wæs asprung | en. *Cæd. Gen. 83.*

drig|e stow|e : dug|otha hyrd|e. *Cæd. Gen.* 164.

man|na swith|ost : man|egra thiod|a. *Alf. Met.* 26. 55.

Will | he woo | her ? : ay | or I'll hang | her.  
*T. of the Shrew*, 1. 2. 198.

1 l : 5. was a well-known couplet in Anglo-Saxon. It was very common in our old romances, and was still flourishing as late as Elizabeth's reign. It must now be considered as obsolete ;

Oht | mid eng|lum : and or|leg nith|. *Cæd. Gen.* 84.

Æf|en ær|est : him arn | on last|. *Cæd. Gen.* 138.

wrath|um weorp|an : on wil|dra lic|. *Alf. Met.* 26. 76.

Ag|amem|non : se eal|les weold|. *Alf. Met.* 26. 10.

Sceot|ta leod|a : and scip|-flotan|. *Brunanburgh War-song*, 11.

nym|the heo | wæs : ahaf|en on|[tha hean lyft].  
*Cæd. Gen.* 1401.

Storyss to rede are delitabill,  
Suppos that thai be nocht bot fabill ;  
Than | suld stor|yss : that suth|fast wer|,  
And thai war said on gud maner,  
Hawe doubill plesance in heryng ;  
The first plesaunce is the carpyng,  
And | the toth|ir : the suth|fastnes|  
That schawys the thing rycht as it wes ;  
And | suth thing|is : that ar | likand|  
Tyll mannys heryng are plesand. *The Bruce*, 1. 1.

Set me a new robe by an olde,  
And | coarse cop|par : by duck|ate gold|,  
An ape unto an elephante,  
Bruck|le byr|all : by di|amante|,  
Set | rich ru|by : to redd | emayle|,  
The raven's plume to peacocke's tayle,  
There shall no less an oddes be seene  
In myne, from everye other queene.  
*Puttenham. Partheniades*, 15.

When I build castles in the air,  
Void | of sor|row : and void | of care|. *Burton. Anat. of Melancholy*.

Wel|come wel|come : ye dark | blue waves|. *Byron. Ch. Harold*, 1. 13. 10.

The lengthened verse is more rare ;

Seow | and set | te : geond sef | an mon | na.

*Codex Exon. Christ, 663.*

Wil | leburn | an : on wor | uld thring | an.

*Cæd. Gen. 1373.*

Verses beginning with 1 *ll.* are occasionally met with, but chiefly in the tumbling verse ; for instance 1 *ll.* : 1. ;

With | him man | fully : for | to fight |.

*M. for M. Flodd. Fielde, 2.*

With | such ho | liness : can | you do | it.

*H. VI. 2. 1. 26.*

It would be useless to mark down every variety, which has been stumbled upon by the writers of such licentious metre as the tumbling verse. Those verses only, which occur often enough to give a character to the rhythm, will be noticed.

Verses beginning with Section 2. 2*l.* were always rare. The lengthened verse is found in Anglo-Saxon ;

All the commownys went him fra,  
That | for thair liff | <sup>1</sup> : war | full fain |

To pass to the Inglis pes again. *The Bruce, 2. 497.*

He that keeps nor crust nor crumb,

Wear | y of all | : shall | want some |. *Lear, 1. 4. 217.*

Man | fæhthu bearn | : mid | dan geard | es.

*Cæd. Gen. 1378.*

Au | lixes mid | : an | hund scip | a.

*Alf. Met. 26. 15.*

Com | ane to | : ceol | e lith | an.

*Alf. Met. 26. 59.*

#### VERSES BEGINNING WITH SECT. 2.

2. 2. is now seldom met with ; the lengthened verse is a common Anglo-Saxon couplet ;

We | did observe | : cou | sin Aumerle |,

How far brought you high Her'ford on his way ?

*R. II. 1. 4. 1.*

---

<sup>1</sup> [But the right reading is *liffis*.—W. W. S.]

## 1.

Still | to be neat | : still | to be drest |,  
 As you were going to a feast,  
 Still to be powder'd, still perfum'd,  
 Lady, it is to be presum'd,  
 Though art's hid causes are not found,  
 All is not sweet, all is not sound.

## 2.

Give | me a look | : give | me a face |,  
 That makes simplicity a grace ;  
 Robes loosely flowing, hair as free,  
 Such sweet neglect more taketh me  
 Than all th' adulteries of art,  
 They strike mine eyes, but not my heart.

*B. Jonson. Epicæne, 1. 1.*

And | to the stack | : or | the barn-door |,  
 Stoutly struts his dames before. *L'Allegro, 51.*

Come | to my bowl | : come | to my arms |,  
 My friends, my brothers.

*Burns. Epistle to J. Lapraik, st. 21.*

Wræc | licne ham | : weorc | e to lean | e. *Cæd. Gen. 37.*

Tro | ia burh | : til | um gesith | um. *Alf. Met. 26. 20.*

Thrie | rethre ceol | : thæt | bith that mæs | te.  
*Alf. Met. 26. 27.*

Hæl | etha bearn | : hæf | don tha mæg | tha.  
*Alf. Met. 26. 49.*

The verse from *L'Allegro* is, I believe, the only one written by Milton in this rhythm.

The verse 2 : 5. has long been one of the standard verses.

Where | the great sun | : begins | his state |.  
*L'Allegro, 60.*

Ere | the first cock | : his mat | in rings |. *L'Allegro, 114.*

2 : 6. was very common in the tumbling verse.

King | without realme | : low now | where I stand |.  
*M. for M. King James IV. 3.*

Now | am I bond | : sometime | I was free |. *Same, 5.*

Whom | should I blame | : I found | that I sought |.  
*Same, 7.*

Pray | we that God | : will grant | us his might |.  
*M. for M. Flodden Field, 6.*

Sone | then the gunnes | : began | a new play |.  
*Same, 15.*

And | the vaunt-garde | : togeth | er are gonē |. *Same, 15.*

And | the luce-head | : that day | was full bent |.  
*Same, 19.*

This is one of those verses which belong to the triple measure; and though never used by Cowper, and those who have left us the happiest specimens of that rhythm, is far from uncommon in the works of our later poets. 2 : 9. is only found in the tumbling verse;

In | the vaunt-garde | : forward fast | did hye |.  
*M. for M. Flod. F. 6.*

Give | the Scots grace | : by King Jem | yes fall |.  
*Same, 25.*

If | the whole quere | : of the mus | es nine |.  
*Shelton's Elegy on Northumberlande, 155.*

2 : 10. is also found in the tumbling verse. It falls within the rhythm of the triple measure, and is constantly used by all the writers of that metre.

And | the whole powre | : of the earle | of Darby |.  
*M. for M. Flod. Field, 14.*

To | the French king | : yf he list | to take heed |.  
*M. for M. Kg. James IV., 12.*

No | 'tis your fool | : wherewith I | am so tak | en.  
*Ben Jonson. Fox, 1. 1.*

The verse 2 l : 1. is very common. When lengthened it forms an Anglo-Saxon couplet.

Un | der the haw | thorn : in | the dale |. *L'Allegro, 68.*

Drug | on and dyd | on : driht | nes wil | lan.  
*Cædmon. Gen. 142.*

Theod | en his theg | nas : thrym | mas weox | on.  
*Cædmon. Gen. 80.*

Dior | e gecep | te : drih | ten Crec | a. *Alf. Met. 26. 19.*

Cyn | inges theg | nas : cys | pan sith | than.  
*Alf. Met. 26. 77.*



Æ|thelstan cyn|ing : eor|la drih|ten.

*Brunanburgh War Song, 1.*

Min|ton forlæt|an : leof|ne hlaf|ord. *Alf. Met. 26. 72.*

Yet | thou art hig|her : far | descen|ded.

*Il Penseroso, 22.*

2 l : 2. was very common in Anglo-Saxon, but always rare in English, and may now be considered as obsolete.

Beorht | and geblæd|fast : bu|endra leas|.

*Cæd. Gen. 89.*

Her cheeke, her chinne, her neck, her nose,  
This | was a lyl|ye : that | was a rose|.

*Puttenham. Partheniades, 7.*

Tems easy for his easye tides,  
Built all along with mannours riche,  
Quin|borows salt | sea : brack|ish Grenewich|.

*Partheniades, 16.*

Through | the sharp haw|thorn : blows | the cold wind .

*Lear, 3. 4. 46.*

seom|odon sweart|e : sith|e ne thorf|ton. *Cæd. Gen. 72.*

mæg|en-cræft mic|el : mod|a gehwile|ea.

*Alf. Met. 26. 105.*

eal|de ge|giun|ge : eal|le forhwerf|ðe. *Alf. Met. 26. 86.*

næf|don hi mar|e : mon|num gelic|es. *Alf. Met. 26. 93.*

2 l : 5. is also common in Anglo-Saxon, but very rare in English.<sup>1</sup>

wearth | under wolc|num : for wig|es heard.

*Alf. Met. 26. 13.*

lath|wende her|e : on lang|ne sith|.

*Cæd. Gen. 68.*

cyn|inges doh|tor : sio Cir|ce wæs|.

*Alf. Met. 26. 56.*

Where|fore I fear | me : that now | I shall|.

*M. for M. King James IV., 7.*

Leavinge the land thye bellsire wan

Too the barbarous Ottoman,

And | for grief chaung|ed : thy ho|ly haunt|.

*Puttenham. Partheniades, 16.*

<sup>1</sup> [Here followed, in the first edition, an incorrect quotation from *Codex Exon. 674.*—W. W. S.]

God | -bearn on grund | um : his gief | e bryt | tath.

*Codex Exon. Christ, 682.*

Tha | gyta wid | land : ne weg | as nyt | te. *Cæd. Gen. 156.*

And | reccan spræc | e : gelic | ne ef | ne. *Alf. Met. 26. 2.*

It is seldom we find, in such short rhythms as the present, the alliteration fall on the second accent of the last section. Raak's "complement" would assist but little in the scanning of such a verse.

2 l : 6. belongs to the triple measure, and, like all those verses which have the rhythm running continuously through both sections, is often met with in that metre. This verse was common in the tumbling metre ; and also, when lengthened, in the early English alliterative poems.

Thus | for my fol | ly : I feele | I do smarte |.

*M. for M. King James IV., 4.*

By | mine own fol | ly : I had | a great fall |. *Same, 7.*

Which | for their mer | its : in field | with me fell |.

*Same, 9.*

Ad | juva pa | ter : then fast | did they cry |.

*M. for M. Flod. Field, 6.*

Nes | gyt iloc | ed : hu long | hit the wer | e.

*The Grave (Thorpe), 7.*

Broughte | forth a bul | le : with bish | opes sel | es.

*P. Ploughman, B. prol. 69.*

Com | en up knel | yng : to kis | sen his bul | les.

*Same, prol. 73.*

Seriauntz it semed : that serveden atte barre,

Pled | ed for pen | yes : and pound | es the lawe |.

*P. Ploughman, B. prol. 211.*

'Tis | a good hear | ing : when chil | dren are to | ward,

But | a harsh hear | ing : when wom | en are fro | ward.

*T. of the Shrew, 5. 2. 182.*

2 l : 9. and 2 l : 10. are also found in this rhythm.

Yet | I beseech | you : of your char | ity |.

*M. for M. Kg. James IV., 15.*

With | the Lord Con | iars : of the north | country |.  
*M. for M. Flod. Field, 7.*

Pres | ed forth bold | ly : to withstand | the might |.  
*Skelton's Elegy on Northumberland, 87.*

Eche | man may sor | row : in his in | ward thought |.  
*Same, 177.*

That | a king crown | ed : an earle durst | not abide |.  
*M. for M. Flod. Field, 5.*

And | our bolde bil | men : of them slewe | mony one |.  
*Same, 15.*

Fled | away from | him : let him lie | in the dust |.  
*Skelton's Elegy, 39.*

Of the verses beginning with 2 ll. there is one, 2 ll. : 2. which has been adopted into the triple measure. It was well known to our tumbling verse.

Con | trary to | mine othe : sol | emnly made |.  
*M. for M. Kg. James IV., 6.*

Van | quished in fielde | I was : to | the rebuke |.  
*Same, 8.*

Lord | whom thou fa | vourest : win | neth the game |.  
*Same, 8.*

#### VERSES BEGINNING WITH SECTION 5.

The verse 5 : 1. is often found in old English poems. It did not become obsolete till after the reign of Elizabeth.

——— He warneth alle and some  
 Of everiche of hir adventures,  
 By avisions, or by figures,  
 But that | our flesh | : hath | no might |  
 To understand<sup>1</sup> it aright.

*Chau. House of Fame. i. 46.*

And sum | thai put | : in | prisoun<sup>2</sup>  
 For-owtyn causse or enchesoun. *The Bruce, l. 279.*

<sup>1</sup> Read understanden.

<sup>2</sup> [But we should read : And sum thai put in hard prisoun. Wyntoun quotes the line in this form.—W. W. S.]

Her eyes, God wott, what stuff they arre,  
 I durst be sworne eche ys a starre;  
 As clere | and brighte |: as | to guide |  
 The pilot in his winter tide.

*Puttenham. Partheniades, 17.*

Gentle breath of yours my sails  
 Must fill, or else my project fails,  
 Which was | to please |: Now | I want |  
 Sp'rits to enforce, &c. *Tempest, Epilogue.*

Now my charms are all o'erthrown,  
 And what strength I have 's mine own,  
 Which is | most faint |: now | t'is true |  
 I must be here confined by you,  
 Or sent to Naples. *Tempest, Epilogue.*

The lengthened verse was common in Anglo-Saxon, but rare in the later dialects.

stod deop | and dim |: driht | ne frem | de. *Cæd. Gen. 105.*

thurh driht | nes word |: dæg | genem | ned. *Cæd. Gen. 130.*

sum heard | geswinc |: hab | ban sceol | dan.  
*Cæd. Gen. 317.*

thurh hand | -mægen |: hal | ig drih | ten. *Cæd. Gen. 247.*

tha seg | nade : self | a drih | ten. *Cæd. Gen. 1390.*

[ferede] on fif | el stream |: fam | igbord | an.  
*Alf. Met. 26. 26.*

thæt Au | lixes |: un | derhæf | de. *Alf. Met. 26. 5.*

on mor | gen tid |: mære | tunc | gol.  
*Brunanburh War Song, 14.*

For by Christ, lo, thus it fareth  
 It is | not all |: gold | that glar | eth.  
*Chau. House of Fame, i. 271.*

And mo curious portraitures,  
 And queinte manner of figures  
 Of gold work, than I saw ever;  
 But cer | tainly |: I | n'ist nev | er<sup>1</sup>  
 Where that it was.

*Chau. House of Fame, i. 125.*

<sup>1</sup> [But the reading is wrong, being ungrammatical. *Nist* is an impossible form, grammar requiring *niste*. The line is then perfectly regular:—

But cer | tainly |: I | nis | te nev | er.—W. W. S.]

Each byas was a little cherry,  
Or as | I think | : a | strawber | ry.

*Puttenham. Prin. Paragon.*

The verse 5 : 2. was never common, and is now almost obsolete.

Of flæsc | -homan | : flod | calle wreah | . *Cæd. Gen. 1386.*

To gyr | wanne | : god | lecran stol | . *Cæd. Gen. 281.*

Thow that besides forreine affayres,  
Canst tend | to make | : yere | ly repayres |  
By summer progresse, and by sporte,  
To shire | and towne | : cit | ye and porte | —  
Thow that canst tend to reade and write  
Dispute | , declame, | : ar | gewe, endyte, |  
In schoole and universitye,  
In prose and eke in poesye. —

*Puttenham. Parth. 16.*

And he | good prince | : hav | ing all lost |  
By waves from coast to coast is tost.

*Pericles. Prol. to Act 2. 34.*

By Pan ! I think she hath no sin  
She is | so light | : lie | on these leaves | ,  
Sleep that mortal sense deceives  
Crown thine eyes.

*Fl. Faith. Sk. 5. 2.*

And from her fair unspotted side  
Two blis | sful twins | : are | to be born |  
Youth and Joy : so Jove hath sworn.

*Comus, 1009.*

Of these | am I | : Coi | la my name | .

*Burns. The Vision, 2. 12.*

The lengthened verse is not more common.

On fæg | e folk | : feow | ertig dag | a. *Cæd. Gen. 1382.*

On Wen | del sæ | : wig | endra scol | a. *Alf. Metr. 26. 31.*

Se lic | ette | : lit | lum and mic | lum. *Alf. Metr. 26. 36.*

——— Advise

Forthwith | how thou | : oughtst | to receive | him.

*Sams. Agon. 328.*

——— The king

Is wise and virtuous, and his noble queen  
Well-struck | in years | : fair | and not jeal | ous.

*R. III. 1. 1. 90.*

The verse 5 : 5. has always been common in English poetry ; in Anglo-Saxon it is found but rarely.

And as | I wake | : sweet Mu | sic breathe |  
Above, | about, | : or un | derneath |. *Il Penseroso*, 151.

Ne wil | le ic leng | : his geon | gra wurth | an. *Cæd. Gen.* 291.

Sweet bird | that shun'nt | : the noise | of fol | ly  
Most mu | sical | : most mel | anchol | y. *Il Penseroso*, 61.

5 : 6. is only met with in the tumbling verse.

This no | ble earle | : full wise | ly hath wrought |.  
*M. for M. Flod. Field*, 3.

Whereof | the Scots | : were right | sore afrayde |.  
*M. for M. Flod. F.* 21.

Fy fy | for shame | : their hearts | were too faint |.  
*Shelton's Elegy on Northumberland*, 42.

In the same licentious metre, we meet with the section 5 : 9.

The Per | se out | : off Northum | berlande |,  
An avow to God made he,  
That he wolde hunte in the Mountains  
Of Cheviat within dayes thre. *Chevy Chase*, 1.

In se | sons past | : who hath herde | or sene.  
*Shelton's Elegy*, 22.

The fa | mous erle | : of Northum | berland |. *Same*, 107.

Also with 5 : 10.

Hee cryde | as he | : had been stikt | with a swerd |.  
*M. for M. King James IV.*, 2.

From high | degree | : to the low | est of all |. *Same*, 7.

Now go | thy ways | : thou hast tam'd | a curst shrew |.  
*T. of the Shrew*, 5. 2. 188.

#### VERSES BEGINNING WITH SECTION 5 l.

The verse 5 l : 1. is common. The lengthened verse is also found in Anglo-Saxon.

In notes with many a winding bout  
Of lin | ked sweet | ness : long | drawn out |. *L' Allegro*, 139.

- gegre | med grim | me : grap | on wrath | e. *Cæd. Gen.* 61.  
 sceop nih | te nam | an : ner | gend ur | e. *Cæd.* 140.  
 gestath | elod | e : strang | um miht | um. *Cæd.* 115.  
 on mer | efloð | e : mid | dum weorth | an. *Cæd.* 145.  
 That on | tha tid | e : theod | a æg | hwilc. *Alf. Met.* 26. 43.  
 That hie | with driht | ne : dæl | an meaht | on. *Cæd.* 26.  
 Ac him | se mæð | a : mod | getwæf | de. *Cæd.* 53.  
 But hail | thou God | dess : sage | and ho | ly. *Il Penseroso*, 11.

5 l : 2. occurs very rarely, except in our old romances and the tumbling verse. The lengthened verse may also be found in Anglo-Saxon.

- Tharfor thai went til Abyrdene,  
 Qhuar Nele the Bruyss come, and the queyn,  
 And oth | ir lad | yis : fayr | and farand |  
 Ilkane for luff off thair husband. *The Bruce*, 2. 512.  
 Both law | and na | ture : doth | me accuse |.  
*M. for M. King James IV.*, 4.  
 And in | fowle man | er : brake | their aray |.  
*M. for M. Flod. Field.* 16.  
 What fran | tyk fren | sy : fyll | in your brayne |.  
*Skelton's Elegy*, 51.  
 To sum | um deor | e : swelc | um he ær | or. *Alf. Met.* 26. 87.  
 His with | erbrec | can : wul | dor gestea | dum. *Cæd. Gen.* 64.

5 l : 5. was always rare, and may now be looked upon as obsolete.

- geond fol | en fyr | e : and fæð | -cyle |. *Cæd. Gen.* 43.  
 A noble hart may haiff nane ess,  
 Na ellys nocht that may him pless,  
 Gyff fre | dome fail | yhe : for fre | liking |  
 Is yharnyt our all othir thing. *The Bruce*, 1. 229.  
 — He is promis'd to be wiv'd  
 To fair | Mari | na : but in | no wise |  
 Till he had done his sacrifice. *Pericles*, 5. 2. 10.  
 But I | will tar | ry : the fool | will stay |  
 And let the wise man fly. *Lear*, 2. 4.

Come hith | er, hith | er : my lit | tle page |  
 Why dost thou weep and wail ?

*Byron. Ch. Harold, l. 13 3.*

Why this | a fan | tome : why that | orac | les  
 I not ; | but who | so : of these | mirac | les  
 The causes know, &c.

*Chau. House of Fame, l. 11.*

5 l: 6. is only found in the tumbling verse.

With four | score thous | and : in good | ly array |.

*M. for M. Flodden Field, 2.*

That roy | all rel | ike : more prec | ious than golde |.

*Same, 6.*

Fulfyld | with mal | ice : of fro | ward entente |.

*Skelton's Elegy, 25.*

Let dou | ble del | inge : in the | have no place |.

*Same, 174.*

In me | all one | ly : were sett | and comprysed |.

*Same, 156.*

Alas | those pleas | ures : be stale | and forsak | en.

*Ben. Jonson. Fox, l. 1.*

5 l: 10. is also to be found in the same barbarous rhythm.

St. Cut | berds ban | ner : with the bish | ops men bolde |.

*M. for M. Flod. Field, 6.*

Sir Ed | ward Stan | ley : in the reare | -warde was he |.

*Same, 14.*

In this rhythm we may also find verses beginning with 5 ll., for instance 5 ll: 2. and 5 ll: 9.

I knew | not ve | rily : who | it should be |.

*M. for M. King James IV., 2.*

That vil | aine hast | arddis : in their fu | rious tene |.

*Skelton's Elegy, 24.*

The first of these belongs to the triple measure, and is common.

The class of verses beginning with the section 6. is now almost obsolete, and in none of the better periods of our literature did these rhythms meet with much favour. They are not often found in Anglo-Saxon; and though they occur more frequently, they are still rare in the Old English alliterative metre. In our ballads they are common; and, as might be expected, they abound in the tumbling verse.



The few which belong to the triple measure, have alone survived in modern usage.

#### VERSES BEGINNING WITH SECTION 6.

The verse 6 : 1. though its rhythm be abrupt and awkward, was used both by Gower and Chaucer—doubtless because it fell within the orthodox number of eight syllables.

And that his shipes dreint were  
Or ell|es ylost|: he | n'ist where|. <sup>1</sup>

*Chau. Ho. of Fame, 1. 233.*

6 : 2. though of the triple measure, is only found in the tumbling verse and some of the later alliterative poems. The sharp and sudden stop between the two sections, is probably the cause why they have been so little favoured.

Of Scot|land he sayde|: late | I was king|.

*M. for M. King James IV., 3.*

Quhyt, seim|lie and soft|: as | the sweit lil|ies.

*Dunbar. Tua Maryit Wemen, 28.*

6 : 5. is also confined to our old romances and the tumbling verse.

Durst nane of Walis in bataill ride;  
No yhet, fra ewyn fell, abide  
Castell or wallyt town within  
That he | ne suld lyff|: and lym|mes tyne|.

*The Bruce, 1. 105.*

That us | to withstand|: he had | no might|.

*M. for M. Flod. Field, 1.*

The fa|ther of wit|: we call | him may|.

*Same, 11.*

Beseech|ing him there|: to show his might|.

*Same, 17.*

The verse 6 : 6. belongs to the triple measure, and is used without scruple even by the most careful writers of that metre.

<sup>1</sup> [But *n'ist* is wrong; grammar requires *niste*; and the latter section is perfectly regular, i.e. is section 5. See note on p. 197.—W. W. S.]

With sor|owful sighes|: as ev|er man herde|.

*M. for M. King James IV., 2.*

With crowne | on my head|: and scep|ter in hand|.

*M. for M. King James IV., 3.*

The breatch | of myne oath|: I did | not regarde.

*Same, 10.*

That æf|re undon|: the wul|e tha dur|e.

*The Grave (Thorpe).*

For Py|thagore's sake|: what bod|y then took | thee?

*Ben Jonson. Fox, 1. 1.*

The first of these verses was very common in the early half of the 16th century. Many short poems were entirely composed of it. It seems, however, to have fallen into disuse shortly afterwards; for Gascoigne, who regrets the exclusive attention that was paid in his time to the common measure, tells his reader, "we have used in times past other kindes of meeters, as, for example, this following :

No wight in this world : that wealth can attayne,  
Unless he beleve : that all is but vain."<sup>1</sup>

This metre was afterwards revived.

6 : 9. was rarely met with except in the tumbling verse ;

I pur|posed war|: yet I fain|ed truce|.

*M. for M. K. James IV., 4.*

Thus did | I, Frenche Kinge,|: for the love | of thee|.

*Same, 4.*

To suf|fre him slain|: of his mor|tall foe|.

*Shelton. Elegy, 38.*

Thus gat | levyt thai|: and in sic | thrillage|,

Bath pur and thai of hey parage.

*The Bruce, 1. 275.*

6 : 10. and 6 : 11. are two of the commonest verses in the triple measure. They are also of constant occurrence in the tumbling verse ;

In this | wretched world|: I may no | longer dwell|.

*M. for M. K. James, 14.*

<sup>1</sup> [See Certain notes of Instruction concerning the making of verse, prefixed to Arber's reprint of Gascoigne's "Steel Glass," p. 34.—W. W. S.]

Our her|ald at armes|: to King Jem|ye did say|.

*M. for M. Flodd. Field, 4.*

With all | the hole sorte|: of that glor|ious place|.

*Shelton's Elegy, 212.*

As per|fightly as|: could be thought | or devys|ed.

*Same, 158.*

#### VERSES BEGINNING WITH SECTION 6 l.

6 l: 1. and 6 l: 2. are extremely rare, but when lengthened are found both in Anglo-Saxon and in our later alliterative meters ;

Thai kyssit thair luffis, at thair partyng,

The King | wmbethocht | him : off | a thing|,

That he fra thine on fute wald ga. *The Bruce, 3. 351.*

geslog|on æt sæc|ce : sweord|a ec|gum. *Brunanburh, 4.*

Of æd|ra gehwær|e : e|gor-stream|as. *Cæd. Gen. 1374.*

Ac ja|pers and jang|lers : Jud|as chil|dren.

*P. Ploughman. B. Prol. 35.*

These verses of ten syllables are the shortest that are found in *Piers Plowman*.<sup>1</sup> They are rarely met with in alliterative poems of a later date ;

His sore | exclama|tions : made | me afferde|.

*M. for M. K. James IV., 2.*

And held | with the com|mons : un|der a cloke|.

*Shelton's Elegy, 76.*

Tha wær|on geset|te : wid|e and sid|e. *Cæd. Gen. 10.*

And raughte | with his rag|man : ryng|es and broch|es.

*P. Ploughman. B. prol. 75.*

In glot|onye God|it wote : gon | hii to bed|de. *Same, 43.*

6 l: 5. is almost peculiar to the tumbling verse ;

Yet were | we in nom|ber : to his | one, three|.

*M. for M. K. James, 8.*

<sup>1</sup> [This may be doubted. The line : "Lightlich lyer leep away thanne" seems only to have *nine* syllables ; see *P. Pl. B. ii. 215.* — W. W. S.]

I trowe | he doth nei | ther : God love | nor dread |.  
*Same, 12.*

That buf | fits the Scots | bare : they lac | ked none |.  
*M. for M. Flod. Field, 20.*

But by | them to know | lege : ye may | attayne |.  
*Shelton's Elegy, 129.*

6l:6. belongs to the triple measure, and as the rhythm runs continuously through the line, it has survived the tumbling verse, of which it once formed one of the most striking features. The lengthened verse is found in *Piers Plowman*.

In peac | eable man | er : I rul | ed my land |.  
*M. for M. Kg. James, 3.*

Full friend | ly and faith | ful : my sub | jects I fand |.  
*Same, 3.*

Full bold | ly their big | men : against | us did come |.  
*Flod. Field, 17.*

Your hap | was unhap | py : to ill | was your spede |.  
*Shelton's Elegy, 61.*

'Twas I | won the wag | er : though you | hit the white |,  
 And be | ing a win | ner : God give | you good night |.  
*Tam. of the Shrew, 5. 2. 186.*

And len | eth such los | eles : that lech | erye haun | ten.  
*P. Ploughman. B. prol. 77.*

There hov | ed an hund | red : in houv | es of selk | e.  
*Same, 210.*

Which soul | fast and loose, | Sir : came first | from Apol | lo.  
*B. Jonson. Fox, 1. 1.*

6l:9. and 6l:10. are only found in the tumbling verse and some of the most slovenly specimens of the triple measure;

Ye had | not been a | ble : to have said | him Nay |.  
*Shelton's Elegy, 70.*

And could | not by fals | hode : either thrive | or thie |.  
*M. for M. K. James, 9.*

For sor | rowe and pi | ty : I gan nere | to resorte |. *Same, 2.*

Now room | for fresh game | sters : who do will | you to know. |  
*B. Jonson. Fox, 1. 1.*

As blithe | and as art | less : as the lamb | on the lea |,  
 And dear to my heart as the light to my ee.  
*Burns. Auld Rob Morris, st. 2.*

Of the verses beginning with 6 *U*. we have one 6 *U* : 2. which still keeps its station in our poetry. It belongs to that class of verses, which have the triple rhythm running through both sections. This was doubtless the cause of its surviving. It is found occasionally in the tumbling verse;

Bothe tem | poral and spirit | ual : for | to complayne |.  
*Skellon's Elegy, 181.*

Why then | thy dogmat | ical : si | lence hath left | thee?  
 Of that | an obstrep | erous : law | yer bereft | me.  
*B. Jonson. Fox, 1. 1.*

In the same loose metre, we sometimes meet with such a verse as 6 *U* : 10.

The Bar | on of Kil | lerton : and both As | tones were there |.  
*M. for M. Flodd. Field, 10.*

## CHAPTER IV.

## VERSE OF FIVE ACCENTS.

Our verse of five accents may be divided into two sections, whereof one contains two, and the other three accents. Accordingly as it opens with one or other of these sections, the character of its rhythm varies materially. We shall in the present chapter pass under review those verses, which begin with the section of two accents.

Before, however, we proceed, I would make one or two observations on a subject, which has already been touched upon in the opening of the last chapter. Gascoigne thought that in a verse of ten syllables, the pause would "be best placed at the end of the first four syllables." He adds, however, soon afterwards, "In rithme royall it is at the writer's discretion, and forceth not where the pause be until the end of the line." Now as the stanza, known by the name of the rhythm royal, was borrowed from the French, this strengthens an opinion already mooted, that, with the other peculiarities of foreign metre, the flow of its rhythm was introduced into our poetry.<sup>1</sup> But that it quickly yielded to the native rhythm of the language is clear, no less from the versification of such poets, as have survived to us, than from the silence of contemporary critics. Gascoigne is the only writer who alludes to this license—a strong proof that it was not *generally* recognised even as a peculiarity of the rhythm royal.

In most of the manuscripts I have seen, containing verse of five accents, the middle pause is marked ; though not so

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<sup>1</sup> It might hence be inferred, that the French verse of five accents had no middle pause. This is incorrect; the French verse of *four* accents, like the rhythmus of the Iambic Dimeter, had none, but the verse of five accents always divided after the fourth syllable.—(*Correction.*)

carefully, as in the *alliterative* poems of the same age. Below are the first eighteen lines of Chaucer's Prologue, from MS. Harl. 1758, and MS. Harl. 7333. The first manuscript gives both the middle and the final pauses.

Whan that Aprill . with his schoures swote .  
 The drought of Marche . hath perced to the rote .  
 And bathed euery veyne . in suche licoure .  
 Of whiche vertue . engendrid is the floure .  
 And zephirus eke . with his swete brethe .  
 Enspired hath . in euery holt and heth .  
 The tendre croppes , and the yong sonne .  
 Into the Ram . his half cours ronne .  
 And smale fowles . maken melodye .  
 That slepen all the nyght . with open eye .  
 So pricke hem nature . in here corages .  
 Than longen folk . to gon in pilgrimages .  
 And palmers for to seke . straunge strondes .  
 To ferne halwes . couthe in sondry londes .  
 And specially . from euerie schires ende .  
 Of Englonde . to Caunterburye thei wende .  
 The holy blisfull martyr for to seke .  
 That hem hath holpen . whan that thei were seke .

Whanne that Aperyll with his shoures swoote  
 The drowght of marche hathe perced to the rote  
 And bathed euery veyne . in suche lykoure  
 Of wiche vertue . engenderid is the floure  
 Whanne zephyrus eke . with his swete brethe  
 Enspiryd hathe in euery holt and hethe  
 The tendre croppys . and the yowng sonne  
 Hathe in the Rame . his halfe cours eronne  
 And smale foules . maken melodye  
 That slepen al the night with open eye  
 So prickethe hem nature . in thayre courages  
 Thanne longen folkes to gon on pilgrimages  
 And palmers eke . to seche straunge strands  
 To ferne halowes . kowthe in sundrye landis  
 And specialye . frome euery shyres ende  
 Of Eng[e]land to Cavnterburye thei wende  
 The hooly blyssfulle martyr. for to seke  
 That hem hathe holpon . whanne that thei were seke .

The occasional omission or misplacing of the dot, is perfectly in keeping with the general inaccuracy of these two copies. Indeed, in MS. Harl. 7333, the pause, when inserted, is often nothing more than a mere scratch of the

pen. Still, as it seems to me, we can only come to *one* conclusion, in examining these manuscripts; namely, that each verse was looked upon as made up of two sections, precisely in the same way as the alliterative couplet of the Anglo-Saxons.

## VERSES BEGINNING WITH SECTION 1,

are of very rare occurrence. They are chiefly used by our dramatists. We shall begin with the verse 1: 2.

Have I not heard these islanders shout out,  
Vive | le roi | : as | I have bank'd | their towns |.  
*King John*, 5. 2. 104.

O | that's well | : fetch | me my cloke | my cloke |.  
*B. Jonson. Ev. Man in his Humour*, 3. 2.

Hold, shepherd, hold ! learn not to be a wronger  
Of | your word | : was | not your prom | ise laid |  
To break their loves first ?  
*Fletcher. Faith. Sheph.* 4. 3.

1: 5. is more common.

Like a pilgrime, which that goth on foote,  
And hath none horse to releve his travaile,  
Hote, drye, wery, and may finde no bote  
Of | wel cold | : whan thrust | doth him | assaile |<sup>1</sup>—  
Right so fare I.  
*Lydgate. Fall of Princes, Prol. of Bk. 3, st. 1.*

Then as a bayte she bringeth forth her ware,  
Sil | ver, gold, | : riche perle |, and prec | ious stone |.  
*Sir T. More. Boke of Fortune.*

Barkloughly castle call you this at hand ?  
Yea, | my lord | : how brooks | your grace | the air |.  
*R. II. 3. 2. 1.*

—— Delights and jolly games  
That shepherds hold full dear, thus put I off;  
Now | no more | : shall these | smooth brows | be girt |  
With youthful coronals. *Fletcher. Fa. Sheph.* 1. 1.

<sup>1</sup> [At the same time, *welle* was certainly *dissyllabic* in Chaucer's time, and may have been so used by Lydgate. The line then becomes perfectly regular : "Of wel | le cold | whan thrust | doth him | assaile."—W. W. S.]



——— Thrice from the banks of Wye,  
And sandy-bottom'd Severn have I sent him  
Boot|less home|: and weath|er-beat|en back|.

1 *H. IV. 3. 1. 65.*

Ja|el who|: with hos|pita|ble guile|  
Smote Sisera sleeping.

*Samson Agon. 989.<sup>1</sup>*

Chaucer affords us a few instances of the same verse lengthened;

✓ Ther n'as quicksilver, litarge, ne brimston,  
Boras, ceruse, ne oile of tartre non,  
Ne | ointment|: that wol|de clen|se or bit|e,<sup>2</sup>  
That him might helpen of his wheelkes white.

*Chau. Prol. 631.*

Verses beginning with the section 1 *l.* abound in Anglo-Saxon; they are also met with in Chaucer and the writers of the fifteenth century, but were rarely used after that period, except by our dramatists.

sec|ga swat|e : sith|than sun|ne up|. *Brunanburh, 13.*

gas|tas geom|re : geof|on death|e hweop|. *Cæd. Exod. 447.*

sid | and swegl|-torht : him | thær sar | gelamp|. *Cæd. Gen. 28.*

beot | forbors|ten : and | forbyg|ed thrym|. *Cæd. Gen. 70.*

torh|te tir|e : and | his torn | gewræc|. *Cæd. Gen. 58.*

wiht | gewor|den : ac | thes wid|a grund|. *Cæd. Gen. 104.*

won|ne wæg|as : tha | wæs wul|dor torht|. *Cæd. Gen. 119.*

up | from eorth|an : thurh | his ag|en word|. *Cæd. Gen. 149.*

sid | setsom|ne : tha | gesund|rod wæs|. *Cæd. Gen. 162.*

miel|um sped|um : met|od eng|la heht|. *Cæd. Gen. 121.*

mid|dan geard|es : met|od af|ter sceaf|. *Cæd. Gen. 136.*

or | geword|en : ne | nu en|de cymth|. *Cæd. Gen. 6.*

gas|ta weard|um : hæf|don gleam | and dream|. *Cæd. Gen. 12.*

<sup>1</sup> [But the right reading is different : Ja|el who with | ishoh|pita|ble guile.—W. W. S.]

<sup>2</sup> [But the right reading is : Ne oin|ement | that wol|de, &c.—W. W. S.]

mon|nes el|na : that | is mæ|ro wyrd|. *Cæd. Gen.* 1399.

Wal|dend ur|e : and | geworh|te tha|. *Cæd. Gen.* 147.

Ag|an wol|de : tha | wearth yr|re God|. *Cæd. Gen.* 34.

The grete clamour and the waimenting  
Which that the ladies made at the brenning  
Of | the bod|ies : and | the gret|e honour|  
That Theseus the noble conqueror  
Doth to the ladies. *Chau. Knightes Tale; C. T.* 993. ✓

Thou mightest wenen that this Palamon  
In | his fight|inge : wer|e a wood | leon|. <sup>1</sup>  
*Knightes Tale; C. T.* 1655. ✓

No more of this for Goddes dignitee  
Quod | oure hos|te : for | thou mak|est me|  
So weary, &c. *Chau. Prol. to Melibeus; C. T.* 13847.

Like | a pil|grime : which | that goth | on foote|.   
*Lydgate (see p. 209).*

Thus | fell Ju|lius : from | his migh|ty pow'r|.   
*Sir T. More. Boke of Fortune.*

—— Up the foresayle goes,  
We fall on knees, amynd the happy gale,  
Which | by God's | will : kind | and calme|ly blowes|. <sup>2</sup>  
*Gascoigne. Journey into Holland,* 122.

Tut! | when struckst | thou : one | blow in | the field|?   
*2 H. VI.* 4. 7. 84.

—— The other again  
Is | my kins|man : whom | the king | hath wrong'd|.   
*R. II.* 2. 2. 112.

—— When comes such another?  
Nev|er! nev|er! : come|, away, | away|! *Jul. Cæs.* 3. 2. 257.

But hast thou yet latched the Athenian's eyes,  
With | the love | juice : as | I bid | thee do|? <sup>3</sup>  
*M. N. D.* 3. 2. 36.

O | this learn|ing : what | a thing | it is|.   
O | this wood|cock : what | an ass | it is|.   
*T. of the Shrew,* 1. 2. 160.

<sup>1</sup> Tyrwhitt very unnecessarily inserts an *as* to eke out the metre "were *as* a wood leon;" [which *as* is not in the best MSS.].

<sup>2</sup> [But Hazlitt's edition gives a complete line: "Which by God's will full kynd and calmly blows."—W. W. S.]

<sup>3</sup> [But the right reading is: "as I *did* bid thee do"; and the line is regular.—W. W. S.]

I thank my blessed angel, never, never,  
Laid | I pen | ny : bet | ter out | than this |.

*B. Jonson. E. M. out of his Humor, l. 1.*

Let him that will ascend the tott'ring seat  
Of | our gran | deur : and | become | as great |  
As are his mounting wishes ; as for me  
Let sweet repose and rest my portion be.

*Sir M. Hale, from Seneca.*

O | that tor | ment : should | not be | confin'd |  
To the body's wounds and sores ! *Samson Agon. 606.*

The lengthened verse is more rare.

Ag | an wol | dun : and | swa eath | e meah | ton.

*Cæd. Gen. 48.*

Wyrd | mid wæg | e : thær | ær weg | as lag | on.

*Cæd. Exod. 457.*

Fus | on fræt | wum : hæf | de fæc | ne hyg | e.

*Cæd. Gen. 443.*

——— Let me think we conquer'd—

Do | , but so | think : as | we may | be con | quer'd.

*Fl. Bonduca, l. 1.*

Hear | ye, cap | tain : are | you not | at leis | ure.

*1 H. VI. 5. 3. 97.*

1 l : 2. is rarely met with after the 15th century, save in the works of our dramatists.

bælc | forbíg | do : tha | he gebolg | en wearth |.

*Cæd. Gen. 54.*

——— And ran in all thair mycht,

To | the fech | taris : or | thai com ner | that place |,  
Off thaim persawyt rycht weill was gud Wallace.

*Wallace, 11. 104.*

——— That deemst of things divine,

As | of hu | man : that | they may al | ter'd be |,  
And chang'd at pleasure for those imps of thine.

*F. Q. 4. 2. 51.*

Gas | ta weard | as : tha | he hit gear | e wis | te.

*Cæd. Gen. 41.*

Spenn | mid spang | um : wis | te him spræ | ca fel | a.

*Cæd. Gen. 445.*

——— Keep your words to-morrow,  
And | do some | thing : wor | thy your meat | ; go guide | 'em,  
And see 'em fairly onward. *Fletcher. Bonduca, 2. 3.*

Pi | pes, trom | pes, : na | kers and clarioun | es  
That in the bataille : blowne bloody sownes.  
*Chau. Knightes Tale ; C. T. 2513.*

1 l. 5. seems at one time to have been recognised, as a standard verse of ten syllables. It fell, however, into almost total disuse, during the reign of Elizabeth.

Fa | um fol | mum : and him | on fæthm | gebræc |.  
*Cæd. Gen. 62.*

Scip | pend us | ser : tha he | that scip | beleac |.  
*Cæd. Gen. 1391.*

Nymph | es faun | es : and Am | adry | ades |.  
*Chau. Knightes Tale ; C. T. 2990.*

Ad | am el | dest : was grow | and in | courage |,  
Forthward, rycht fayr, auchtene yer of age,  
Large off persone ; both wiss, worthi, and wicht,  
Gude | king Rob | ert : in his | tyme maid | him knycht |  
Lang | tyme ef | tir : in Bruc | es weris | he baid |,  
On Engliiss men monè gud iornè maid. *Wallace, 3. 45.*

Full | gret slauch | tyr : at pit | te was | to se |,  
Of | trew Scot | tis : oursett | with sut | elte |. *Same, 1. 107.*

——— His rebell children three,  
Henry and Richard, who bet him on the breast ;  
Jeff | rey one | ly : from that | offence | was free |,  
Hen | ry dy | ed : of Eng | lands crown | possest |,  
Rich | ard liv | ed : his fa | ther to | molest |,  
John | the young | est : pect still | his fa | ther's eye |,  
Whose deedes unkind the sooner made him die.  
*Ferrers. M. for M. Gloucester, ii. 14.*

For having rule and riches in our hand,  
Who durst gaynessay the thing that we averd ?  
Will | was wis | dom : our lust | for law | did stand |.  
*Sackville. M. for M. Buckingham, 37.*

Idolatrye from deepe devotion,  
Vul | gaire wor | shippe : from worlde | s promo | tion |.  
*Puttenham. Parth.*

Mar | riage, unc | le : alas | my days | are young |,  
And fitter is my study and my books. 1 *H. VI. 5. 1. 21.*

There is *one* verse in the P. L. which at first sight would seem to fall within the present law.

Tasting concoct, digest, assimilate,  
And | corpor|eal : to in | corpor|eal turn|. *P. L.* 5. 413.

But when we remember the licence which Milton allowed himself in the position of his pauses, and also that an emphasis falls on the first syllable of *incorporeal*, I think there can be little doubt but he read it as the verse 3:5.<sup>1</sup>

And | corpor|eal to in | : corpor|eal turn|.

1 l : 6. is exceedingly rare, and seems to have ended its career in the tumbling verse.

A band thai maid in prewa illusioun  
At | thair pow|er : to work | his confu|sioun|. *Wallace*, 11. 205.

#### VERSES BEGINNING WITH SECTION 2.

2 : 1. is met with in the writers of the 15th century, and in our dramatists.

Tyn | winter full| : tha | sio tid | gelomp|. *Alf. Met.* 26. 17.

Learne what is virtue, therein is great solace.  
Learne | what is truth| : sad|ness and | prudence|.

*Barclay. Schip of Foles, Of Mockers*, st. 3.

Rich|esse, honour,| : welth | and aun|cestry|,  
Hath me forsaken, and lo now here I ly.

*Sir T. More. Ruful Lamentation.*

Poi|son'd, ill fare|! : dead|! forsook|! cast off|!  
*Kg. John*, 8. 7. 35.

Nay | if you melt| : then | will she | run mad|. *1 H. IV.* 3. 1. 212.

Break | open shops| : noth|ing can | you steal|,  
But thieves do lose it. *T. of Athens*, 4. 3. 450.

No more the company of fresh fair maids,  
And wanton shepherds be to me delightful,  
Nor the shrill pleasing sound of merry pipes,

<sup>1</sup> See ch. 5.

Under some shady dell, when the cool wind  
Plays | on the leaves |: all | be far | away |  
Since thou art far away. *Fletcher. Faithful Shep.* 1. 1.

Help'd by the great pow'r of the virtuous moon  
In | her full light |: oh | you sons <sup>1</sup> | of earth |,  
You only brood, unto whose happy birth  
Virtue was given, &c. *Fletcher. Faithful Shep.* 2. 2.

In Ireland have I seen this stubborn Cade  
Oppose himself against a troop of kernes—  
And, in the end being rescued, I have seen him  
Ca|per upright |: like | a wild | Moris | co. <sup>2</sup>  
2 *H. VI.* 3. 1. 360.

2 : 2. has always been one of the standard verses in the metre of 5 accents.

Oth|ers apart |: sat | on a hill | retir'd |. *P. L.* 2. 557.

Cur|teis he was |: low | ly and ser | visa | ble. *Chau. Prol.* 99.

2 : 3. was never used by Dryden and his school, nor indeed were any of those verses, which included the section 3. I cannot help thinking that good taste was shown in rejecting them, even though sanctioned by Spenser and by Milton.

But this good knight, soon as he them can spy,  
For | the cool shade |: thith | er has | tily got |. <sup>3</sup>  
*F. Q.* 1. 2. 29.

Fee|bly she shriek'd |: but | so fee | bly indeed |,  
That Britomart heard not. *F. Q.* 4. 7. 4.

—— Thou with thy lusty crew  
False titled sons of gods, roaming the earth  
Cast | wanton eyes |: on | the daugh | ters of men |.  
*P. R.* 2. 180.

—— He who receives  
Light | from above |: from | the foun | tain of light |,  
No other doctrine needs. *P. R.* 4. 289.

<sup>1</sup> That is, the plants which the speaker had just gathered.

<sup>2</sup> [But the Globe edition puts *him* before *Caper* in the same line.]

<sup>3</sup> [But the Globe edition has: "For the cool shade him thither hastily got"; which is sufficiently smooth.—W. W. S.]

✓ 2 : 5. has been one of our standard verses of five accents since the days of Chaucer.

But rich he was of holy thought and werk ;  
He | was also | : a lern | ed man | a clerk |  
That Cristes gospel trewely wolde preche. *Chau. Prol.* 481.

Some | to whom Heav'n | : in wit | has been | profuse |  
Want | as much more | : to turn | it to | its use |.  
*Pope, Essay on Criticism,* 80.

Crea | ture so fair | : his rec | oncile | ment seek | ing.  
*P. L.* 10. 943.

#### VERSES BEGINNING WITH SECTION 2 l.

2 l : 1. has been common in our poetry from the earliest period, and is still counted among the standard verses of 5 accents.

Met | od on mon | num : mer | e swith | e grap |.  
*Cæd. Gen.* 1381.

glad | ofer grun | das : god | es con | del beorht |.  
*Brunanburh,* 15.

rod | or arær | de : and | this rum | e land |. *Cæd. Gen.* 114.

som | od on sand | e : nys | ton sor | ga wiht |. *Cæd. Gen.* 242.

dæl | on gedwil | de : nol | don dreog | an leng |.  
*Cæd. Gen.* 23.

stælg | ne gestig | an : sum | mæg styl | ed sweord |.  
*Exeter MS. Christ,* 679.

sing | an and sec | gan : tham | bith snyt | tru cræft |.  
*Exeter MS. Christ,* 667.

word | cwithe writ | an : sum | um wig | es sped |. *Same,* 673.

leoht | æfter thys | trum : heht | tha lif | es weard |.  
*Cæd. Gen.* 144.

flot | an and sceot | ta : thær | geflem | ed wearth |.  
*Brunanburh,* 32.

✓ A clerk ther was of Oxenforde also  
That | unto log | ik : had | de long | ygo |.  
*Chaucer. Prol.* 285.

Whence | and what art | thou : ex | ecra | ble shape |.  
*P. L.* 2. 681.

wlit | e gewem | med : heo | on wrac | e sith | than.  
*Cæd. Gen.* 71.

gum| -rinca gyd| en : cuth| e gal| dra fel| a.  
*Alf. Met.* 26. 53.

beor| nas forbred| an : and | mid bal| ocras| tum.  
*Alf. id.* 75.

Thra| cia cyn| ing : thæt | he thon| an mos| te. *Alf. id.* 22,

wid| e eteow| de : tha | se wul| dor cyn| ing. *Cæd. Gen.* 165.

One | that lusts af| ter : ev| 'ry sev| eral beau| ty.  
*Fletcher. Faith. Sh.* 1. 2.

2*l* : 2. is met with chiefly in the works of our dramatists. It is not found in the "heroic verse" as used by Dryden and Pope.

God liketh not that men us Rabbi call  
Nei| ther in mar| ket : ne | in your larg| e hall| .  
*Ch. Sompnoures Tale; C. T.* 7779.

Know| and the wor| schip : and | the gret no| bilnace|  
Of him quhilk sprang that tym in mony place.  
*Wallace,* 11. 267.

Whiles | I in Ire| land : nour| ish a migh| ty band| .  
2 *H. VI.* 3. 1. 348.

Keep | his brain fum| ing : Ep| icure| an cooks|  
Sharpen with cloyless sauce his appetite.  
*A. and C.* 2. 1. 24.

Write | them togeth| er : yours | is as fair | a name| .  
*Jul. Cæs.* 1. 2. 144.

—— If aught propos'd—  
Of difficulty or danger could deter  
Me | from attemp| ting : where| fore do I | assume|  
These royalties ?  
*P. L.* 2. 450.

Ic | the mæg eath| e : eal| dum and leas| um spel| lum.<sup>1</sup>  
*Alf. Met.* 26. 1.

Æ| fter to al| dre : thæs | we her in| ne mag| on.  
*Cæd. Gen.* 437.

Let | me not think | on't : frail| ty thy name | is wom| an.  
*Hamlet,* 1. 2. 146.

Where | is our un| cle? : what | is the mat| ter, Suf| folk ?<sup>2</sup>  
2 *H. VI.* 3. 2. 28.

<sup>1</sup> [But *spellum* belongs to the line following.—W. W. S.]

<sup>2</sup> [The Globe edition has, "what's the matter."—W. W. S.]



Give | me the map | there : know | that we have | divid|ed  
In three our kingdom. *Lear*, 1. 1. 38.

27 : 5. like all those verses which had a supernumerary syllable between the sections, was rejected by Dryden and his imitators.

Lag|o mid lan|de : geseah | tha lif|es weard|. *Cæd. Gen.* 163.

God|es forgym|don : hie hyr|a gal | beswac|. *Cæd. id.* 327.

Draw | near to for|tune : and la|bour her | to please|,  
If that ye thynke yourselfe to wel at ease.  
*Sir T. More. Boke of Fortune.*

Give | me the dag|gers : the sleep|ing and | the dead|  
Are but as pictures. *Macbeth*, 2. 2. 53.

In vain thou striv'st to cover shame with shame,  
Or | by eva|sions : thy crime | uncov|er'st more|. *Samson*, 841.

Har|pies and hy|dras : or all | the mon|strous forms|  
Twixt Africa and Ind. *Comus*, 605.

Fyr|ena frem|man : ac hie | on frith|e lif|don. *Cæd. Gen.* 19.

———— I hear a knocking  
At | the south en|try : retire | we to | our cham|bers.  
*Macbeth*, 2. 2. 66.

#### VERSES BEGINNING WITH SECTION 5.

5 : 1. is very rare. The cause is evidently the sharp and abrupt division between the two sections.

Thæm Ca|sere| : cyn|eric|u twa|. *Alf. Met.* 26. 6.

And he that is approv'd in this offence,  
Though he hath twinn'd with me, both at a birth,  
Shall lose | me. What|! : in | a town | of war|,  
To manage private and domestic quarrel!  
*Othello*, 2. 3. 211.

———— Shapes of grief  
Which, look'd on as it is, is nought but shadows  
Of what | is not<sup>1</sup> | : Then, | most gra|cious queen|  
More than your lord's departure weep not. *R. II.* 2. 2. 23.

<sup>1</sup> [The Globe edition has, "Of what it is not," &c.—W. W. S.]

And weor|thodon|: swa | swa wul|dres cyn|ing.<sup>1</sup>  
*Alf. Met.* 26. 45.

Yea, look'st | thou pale|? let | me see | the writ|ing.  
*R. II.* 5. 2. 57.

The King of heav'n forbid our lord the king  
 Should so with civil and uncivil arms  
 Be rush'd | upon|!: thy | thrice no|ble cous|in  
 Harry Bolingbroke doth humbly kiss thy hand.  
*R. II.* 3. 3. 101.

5:2. has been common in our verse of ten syllables from the days of Chaucer.

This Pal|amon|: when | he these word|es herd|e,  
 Dispitously he loked and answer|de.  
*Knights Tale; C. T.* 1125.

And Phœbus, fresh as bridegroom to his mate,  
 Came dan|cing forth|: shak|ing his dew|y hair|. ✓  
*F. Q.* 1. 5. 2.

False el|oquence|: like | the prismat|ic glass|  
 Its gaudy colours spreads on every place.  
*Pope. Essay on Criticism,* 311.

—— Self-displeas'd  
 For self-|offence|: more | than for God | offen|ded.  
*Samson,* 514.

Some of our later critics, and among others Johnson, have recorded their objections to any verse which ends with the section 2. Pemberton, the friend and panegyrist of Glover, considers the measure of the verse

And tow'rds | the gate|: roll|ing her bes|tial train|  
*P. L.* 2. 873.

as faulty; because the third foot is "a trochee." He would correct it thus,

And rol|ling tow'rds | the gate|: her bes|tial train|.

The alteration seems to me anything but an improvement. The uneven flow of Milton's line, is far better adapted to express a "rolling" motion, than the continuous rhythm of his presumptuous critic.

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<sup>1</sup> [But the MS. omits *And*.—W. W. S.]

5 : 3. was last patronised by Milton. Its revival is hardly to be wished for.

Als bestiall thar rycht cours till endur  
 Weyle helpit ar be wyrkyn off natur,  
 On fute and weynge ascendand to the bycht,  
 Conser|wed weill|: be | the ma|kar of mycht|.

*Wallace, 3. 5.*

The par|dale swift|: and | the ty|ger cruell|,  
 The antelope and wolf both fierce and fell. *F. Q. 1. 6. 26.*

His work enjoys not what itself doth say,  
 For it shall never find one resting day;  
 A thousand hands shall toss each page and line,  
 Which shall be scanned by a thousand eyne,  
 That sab|bath's rest|: or | this sab|bath's unrest|<sup>1</sup>  
 Hard is to say, whether's the happiest.

*Hall, on Mr. Greenham's "Book of the Sabbath."*

Tis true I am that sp'rit unfortunate  
 Who, leagu'd with millions more in sad revolt  
 Kept not my happy station, but was driven  
 With them | from bliss|: to | the bot|tomless pit|.

*P. R. 1. 358.*

———— Eternal wrath  
 Burn'd af|ter them|: to | the bot|tomless pit|. *P. L. 6. 865.*

———— In his own image he  
 Crea|ted thee|: in | the im|age of God|  
 Express.

*P. L. 7. 526.*

There can, I think, be little doubt, that Milton saw in this rhythm a certain fitness for his subject. The reader is almost forced to dwell on the preposition which begins the second section; otherwise he may miss the accent, and sink the line into a miserable verse with only four accented syllables. This resting place serves the purpose of an emphatic stop, and seems to have been intended to give force to the words which follow, "the bottomless pit," "the image of God."

5 : 5. is one of the standard verses of 5 accents.

From cneo|-mægum|: that hie | set cam|pe oft|.

*Brunanburh, 8.*

<sup>1</sup> [But perhaps *this* is emphatic, and we should read: "or this | sab|bath's unrest|." Dr. Guest, in the first edition, prints "or *the* sabbath's unrest;" but the right reading seems to be *this*.—W. W. S.]

And wek|e ben|: the ox|en in | my plow|, ✓  
The remenant of my tale is long enow.

*Chau. The Knightes Tale; C. T. 889.*

And hear | me woods |: and si|lence of | this place |  
And ye | sad hours |: that move | a sul|len pace|.

*Fletcher. Fa. Sheph. 4. 4.*

And pi|ous awe |: that fear'd | to have | offen|ded.

*P. L. 5. 135.*

This verse is occasionally found doubly lengthened, in the works of our dramatists.

He must | not live |: to trum|pet forth | my in|famy.

*Per. 1. 1. 145.*

——— And hence we do conclude

That what|so'er |: hath flux|ure and | humid|ity.

*B. Jon. E. M. out of his H. Prol. 93.*

5 : 6. seems rarely to have been used after the 15th century, even by our dramatists.

SchyR Ran|ald had |: the Per|seys protec|tioun |

As for all part to tak the remissioun.

*Wallace, 1. 333.*

Twa yeris thus with myrth Wallace abaid

Still in|to Frans |: and mon|y gud jor|nay maid|.

*Wallace, 11. 144.*

How fi|ery |: and for|ward our ped|ant is|.

*T. of the Shrew, 3. 1.*

5 l : 1. has always been among the standard verses of five accents ;

A mer|chant was | ther : with | a forked berd|,

In mottelee, and high on hors he sat,

And on his hed a Flaundrish bever hat. ✓ *Chau. Prol. 272.*

What strong|er breast|-plate : than | a heart | untain|ted.

*2 H. VI. 3. 2. 232.*

——— With all his host

Of reb|el an|gels : by | whose aid | aspir|ing...

He trusted to have equall'd the Most High. *P. L. 1. 37.*

The following is an instance of the verse doubly lengthened ;

If that my cousin King be King of England,

It must | be gran|ted : I | am Duke | of Lan|caster.

*R. II. 2. 3. 123.*

## 5 l : 2. fell into disuse after Milton's death ;

And with that word he caught a great mirrou,  
 And saw that chaunged was all his colour ;  
 And saw | his vis | age : all | in anoth | er kind | ,  
 And right anon it ran him in his mind.

*The Knightes Tale ; C. T. 1401.*

Sound drums | and trum | pets : bold | ly and cheer | fully | .

*R. III. 5. 3. 269.*

She, guilt | less dam | sel : fly | ing the mad | pursuit |  
 Of her enraged step-dame Guendolen.

*Comus, 829.*

My voice thou oft hast heard, and hast not fear'd,  
 But still rejoic'd : how is it now become  
 So dread | ful to | thee ? : That | thou art na | ked, who |  
 Hath told thee ?

*P. L. 10. 119.*

——— Let grief

Convert | to ang | er, blunt | not the heart | , enrage | it.

*Macb. 4. 3. 229.*

When flame | and fu | ry : make | but one face | of hor | ror.

*Fletch. Loy. Subj. 1. 3.*

Gentle to me and affable hath been

Thy con | descen | sion : and | shall be hon | our'd ev | er

With grateful memory.

*P. L. 8. 648.*

## 5 l : 5. did not survive Milton ;

Of sterres that ben cleped in scriptures  
 That on | Puel | la : that oth | er Ru | beus | .  
 This God of armes was araied thus—

*Chau. The Knightes Tale ; C. T. 2046.*

The sword | flaw fra | him : a fur | breid on | the land | ,

Wallas was glad : and hynt it sone in hand.

*Wallace, 1. 405.*

Then mayst | thou bold | ly : defy | her turn | ing chaunce | ,  
 She can thee neither hinder nor advance.

*Sir T. More. Boke of Fortune.*

Now, broth | er Rich | ard, : Lord Has | tings, and | the rest | .

*3 H. VI. 4. 7. 1.*

And to the ground her threw ; yet n'old she stent

Her bitt | er rail | ing : and foul | revil | ement | .

*F. Q. 2. 4. 12.*

Or search'd the hopeful thicks of hedgy rowes  
 For bri|ery ber|ries : or hawes | or sowl|er sloes|. *Hall. Sat. 3. 1. 14.*

How are you join'd with hell in triple knot,  
 Against the unarm'd weakness of one virgin.  
 Alone | and help|less! : is this | the con|fidence|  
 You gave me, brother? *Comus, 581.*

Ah! fro|ward Clar|ence : how ev|il it | besecms | thee  
 To flatter Henry. *3 H. VI. 4. 7. 84.*

Farewell my eagle! when thou flew'st, whole armies  
 Have stoop'd | below | thee : at pas|sage I | have seen | thee  
 Ruffle the Tartars. *Fl. Loyal Subj. 1. 3. 21.*

Byron has given us one instance of the verse 5 l : 5. but rather through negligence than of set purpose;

I see | before | me : the glad|ia|tor lie|. *Childe H. 4. 140.*

5 l : 6. is very rare. It prevailed chiefly in the 15th century;

Schir Ran|ald Craw|furd : beho|wide that tyme | be thar|,  
 For he throw rycht was born schirreff of Air. *Wallace, 4. 15.*

Verses beginning with 5 ll. are occasionally found in Chaucer, and are not unfrequent in our dramatists. Massinger particularly affected this double lengthening of the first section.

#### 5 ll : 1.

They teach their teachers with their depth of judgment,  
 And are | with ar|guments : a|ble to | convert  
 The enemies to our Gods. *Mass. Virg. Martyr, 1. 1. 48.*

When that the Knight had thus his tale told,  
 In all | the com|paynie : n'as | ther yong | ne old|, ✓  
 That he ne said it was a noble storie.  
*Chau. The Milleres Prol.; C. T. 3111.*

It is the Prince of Wales that threatens thee,  
 Who nev|er prom|iseth : but | he means | to pay|. *1 H. IV. 5. 4. 42.*

To meet | Northum|berland : and | the Prel|ate Scroop|. *Same, 5. 5. 37.*

Verses beginning with the sections 6. and 6 l. were certainly used by Chaucer; though, in the present condition of his works, it is difficult to say to what extent. They were very common in the century, which succeeded his death, but in the 16th century fell rapidly into disfavour. They are found but rarely even in the plays of our dramatists, though I suspect that Shakespeare's editors have silently corrected the rhythm of many verses, which, as Shakespeare wrote them, contained the obnoxious section. The rare occurrence of these verses in Anglo-Saxon is matter of some surprise.

## 6 : 1.

Me lif | es onlah | : se | this leoht | onwrah |.

*Riming Poem, 1.*

## 6 : 2.

And as | he was wont | : whis | tered in | mine eare |.

*M. for M. Kg. James IV. 1.*

Was not Richard of whom I spake before  
A rebell playne untill his father dyed,  
And John likewise an en'my evermore  
To Rich | arde againe | : and | for a reb | ell tried | ?

*Ferrers. M. for M. Gloucester, ii. 18.*

## 6 : 5.

Off cornikle quhat suld I tary lang,  
To Wal | lace agayne | : now breiff | ly will | I gange |.

*Wallace, 1. 143.*

Yet are mo fooles of this abusion,  
Whiche of wise men despiseth the doctrine,  
With mowes, mockes, scorne and collusion,  
Reward | ing rebukes | : for their | good dis | cipline |.

*Barclay. Schip of Foles, Of Mockers, st. 6.*

On Hol | yrood day | : the gal | lant Hot | spur there |,  
Young Harry Percy and brave Archibald  
At Holmedon met.

*1 H. VI. 1. 1. 52.*

Lord Mar | shall, command | : our of | ficers | at armes |,<sup>1</sup>  
Be readie to direct these home alarmes. *R. II. 1. 1. 204.*

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<sup>1</sup> Fol. Ed. 1623. In the modern Editions the word *Lord* is omitted.

6:6. is only found in very loose metre, like that of the tumbling verse;

Hereaf|ter by me|: my suc|cessors may | beware|. ✓  
*M. for M. Kg. James IV. 11.*

Preserve | the red rose|: and be | his protec|tion|. ✓  
*M. for M. Flodden F. 25.*

Verses beginning with the section 6 l. are occasionally met with, but rarely after the middle of the 16th century.

## 6 l : 1.

—— I wonder this time of the yere  
 Whennes that swete savour cometh so,  
 Of ros|es and lil|ies: that | I smel|le here|. ✓  
*Chau. The second Nonnes Tale; C. T. 15712.*

O heartless fooles, haste here to our doctrine, . . .  
 For here | shall I shewe | you : good | and veri|tie|,  
 Encline | and ye find | shall : great | prosper|itie|,  
 Ensu|ing the doc|trine : of | our fa|thers olde|,  
 And godly lawes in valour worth great golde.  
*Barclay. Schip of Foles, Of Mockers, st. 1.*

His soldiers spyng his undaunted spirit,  
 A Tal|bot, a Tal|bot : cri|ed out | amain|. ✓  
*1 H. VI. 1. 1. 127.*

## 6 l : 2.

It also proved full often is certayne,  
 That they | that on moc|kers: al|way their min|des cast|,<sup>1</sup>  
 Shall of all other be mocked at the last.  
*Barclay. Schip of Foles, id. st. 9.*

## 6 l : 5.

Take ye example by Cham the son of Noy,  
 Which laugh|ed his fa|ther : un|to deris|ion|. ✓  
*Barclay. Schip of Foles, id. st. 13.*

Verses beginning with the sections 9, 9 l. are sometimes, though rarely, met with in our dramatists.

## 9 : 5.

We may bold|ly spend|: upon | the hope | of what|  
 Is to come in. ✓  
*1 H. IV. 4. 1. 54.*

<sup>1</sup> [But Jamieson's edition has *mockes*, i.e., mocks, not *mockers*. This is obviously right; and the scansion is probably different.—W. W. S.]



——— The people of Rome, for whom we stand,  
 A special party have by common voice,  
 In elec|tion for|: the Ro|man Em|pery|,  
 Chosen Andronicus. *Tit. And.* 1. 1. 20.

9 l : 1 l.

——— Tell him, if he will,  
 He shall ha' | the gro|grans : at | the rate | I told | him.  
*B. Jonson. E. M. in his Humour, 2.*

## CHAPTER V.

WE have now to consider those verses of five accents, which have three accented syllables in the first section; and shall begin with observing upon certain peculiarities of their rhythm; more especially such as distinguish them from the class of verses, we have just passed under review.

There was, at one time, much vague and unprofitable speculation as to the *best* position of the middle pause—an indeterminate problem, which admits of several answers. Gascoigne thought the pause would be “best placed” after the fourth syllable; King James preferred the sixth. The latter objects specially to the fifth, because it is “odde, and everie odde fute is short.” Johnson’s objection to the middle pause, when it follows an unaccented syllable, has been already noticed; he would tolerate it when the sense was merely suspended, but not when it closed a period.

There are certainly many sentences, which ought to end with a full and strongly marked rhythm; and, as certainly, others in which a feeble ending, so far from a defect, may be a beauty. I consider it a beauty in the very verse which Johnson has quoted to prove it the contrary;

——— He with his horrid crew  
Lay vanquish’d, rolling in the fiery gulph  
Confounded though immortal. But his doom  
Reserv’d him to more wrath, &c. P. L. 1. 51.

When we are told, that such “a period leaves the ear unsatisfied,” we must remember, that Johnson’s ear was educated to admire the precise, but cold and monotonous rhythm of Pope. As to its leaving the reader “in expectation of the remaining part of the verse,” I cannot see in what consists the objection.

There are also sentences, which ought to end slowly and

with dignity; but there are others, which may with equal propriety end abruptly.

Whether the pause, then, be best placed after the section of two, or of three accents; whether after an accented or an unaccented syllable; must depend entirely on the circumstances of each case. It may be granted, that the "noblest and most majestic pauses" are those which follow the fourth and sixth syllables, and more especially the sixth; and though the latter ought not to be preferred, *because* it makes "a full and solemn close," yet it deserves our preference, whenever such a close is necessary. There is certainly something imposing in that "complete compass of sound," to which Johnson listened with so much pleasure, when the pause followed the sixth syllable. Those who are familiar with his favourite rhythms, will readily understand "the strong emotions of delight and admiration" with which he professes to have read the following passages;

Before the hills appear'd or fountain flow'd,  
Thou with eternal wisdom didst converse,  
Wisdom thy sister, and with her didst play  
In presence of th' almighty Father, pleas'd  
With thy celestial *song*.

*P. L. 7. 8.*

Or other worlds they seem'd, or happy isles,  
Like those Hesperian gardens, fam'd of old,  
Fortunate fields, and groves and flow'ry vales,  
Thrice happy isles! But who dwelt happy there  
He staid not to *inquire*.

*P. L. 3. 567.*

———— He blew  
His trumpet, heard in Oreb since, perhaps,  
When God descended; and perhaps once more  
To sound at gen'ral *doom*.

*P. L. 11. 73.*

From the importance which Milton attached to "*apt numbers*," it is clear that the poet and his critic differed no less in theory than in practice. The former moved with majesty, whenever his subject required it; the latter loved the pomp of words for its own sake. The one wished to suit his rhythm to his matter; the other too often swelled out a thought, which could ill bear it, in order to fill a rolling and a stately period.

We have seen that several of our modern critics, and among them Johnson, objected to any verse, whose second section began abruptly. As the objection is supported by examples, which belong to the class of verses we are now considering, a few observations upon it will not, I think, be altogether out of place. It is said, that the injury to the measure is remarkably striking, when the "vicious verse" concludes a period.

——— This delicious place  
For us too large; where thy abundance wants  
Partakers, and uncropt : falls | to the ground|. P. L. 4. 729.

——— His calm and harmless life . . .  
Does with substantial blessedness abound,  
And the soft wings of peace : cov|er him round|. *Transl. of Virgil; Georg. 2.*

In the first of these verses, I can only see those "apt numbers," which Milton affected beyond any other poet, that has written our language. But Cowley is indefensible. Instead of accommodating the flow of his verse to the subject, he has expressed his beautiful thought in the most jerking line his measure would allow. Giving all his attention to the smoothness of his *syllables*, he seems to have forgotten his *rhythm*.

The whole, however, of Johnson's criticism is founded on false premises. When he denounced the verses last quoted, as gross violations of "the law of metre," he had set out with assuming, that the repetition of the accent "at equal times," was "the most complete harmony of which a single verse is capable." Our mixed rhythms were merely introduced for the purposes of variety; to relieve us from the weariness induced by "the perpetual recurrence of the same cadence," and to make us "more sensible of the harmony of the pure measure." This notion is not of modern date; for so early as the sixteenth century, Webbe had laid it down, that "the natural course" of English verse ran "upon the Iambicke stroke;" and that "by all likelihood it had the origin thereof." He might have been taught sounder doctrine by his contemporary Gascoigne.

This critic laments that they were fallen into such "a plain and simple manner of writing, that there is none other foote used but one," and that such "sound or scanning continueth through the whole verse." He admires "the libertie in feete and measures" used by their Father Chaucer; and tells his reader, that "whosoever do peruse and well consider his works, he shall find, although his lines are not alwayes of one self-same number of syllables, yet being read by one who hath understanding, the longest verse, and that which hath most syllables in it, will fall to the eare correspondent to that which hath fewest syllables in it; and likewise that which hath in it fewest syllables, shall be founde yet to consist of wordes, that have such naturall sounde, as may seeme equal in length to a verse, which hath many moe syllables of lighter accents."

There can be no doubt, that our heroic metre was from the first a mixed one; and though, owing to various causes—chiefly to the prevalence of false accentuation—it has approached nearer and nearer to the common measure; yet to narrow its limits, beyond what is necessary for the security of the accent, is to impair its beauty no less than its efficiency.

Our verses of five accents begin much more commonly with sections 1. and 1 l. when the pause follows the third accent, than when it follows the second. The greater length of the section, and the more continuous flow of the rhythm, is doubtless the cause.

1: 1 l. is met with in Anglo-Saxon, but in English verse hardly ever.

Se | the wæ | trum weold | : wreah | and theah | te.

*Cæd. Gen. 1377.*

Tha | wæs soth | swa sær | : sibb | on heof' num.

*Cæd. id. 78.*

sith | than wid | e rad | : wole | num un | der.

*Cæd. id. 1392.*

swang | that fyr | on twa | : feond | es cræf' te.

*Cæd. id. 449.*

niht | a oth | er swile | : nith | wæs reth | e.

*Cæd. id. 1393.*

1:2. is also rare.

Hu|bert, keep | this boy |: Phil|ip, make up|,  
My mother is assailed in our tent,  
And ta'en, I fear. *Kg. John, 3. 2. 352.*

Wul|der-fies|tan wic |: wer|odes thrym|me. *Cæd. Gen. 27.*

syn|nihte | bescald |: sus|le gein|nod. *Cæd. id. 42.*

o|fer sealt|ne sæ |: sund|wudu drif|an.  
*Exeter MS. Christ, 677.*

O|ferhyd|ig cyn |: eng|la of heof|num. *Cæd. Gen. 66.*

1:5. is not unfrequently used by the writers of the fifteenth century, and by our older dramatists.

On | his lif|dagum |: gelic|ost wæs|. *Alf. Met. 26. 88.*

On | thæm ig|londe |: the au|lixes|. *Alf. id. 58.*

Zeph|erus | began |: his mor|ow couras|;  
The swete wapour thus fra the ground resourss.  
*Wallace, 8. 1187.*

Serve | her day | and night |: as rev|erently|  
Upon thy knees as any servaunt may,  
And, in conclusion, that thou shalt win thereby,  
Shall not be worth thy service, I dare say.  
*Sir T. More. Boke of Fortune.*

Sound, trumpets, and set forwards, combatants.  
Stay|! the king | hath thrown |: his war|der down|. *R. II. 1. 3. 117.*

\* First that he lie upon the truckle bed,  
Whiles his young maister lieth o'er his head,  
Sec|ond, that | he do |: on no | default|,  
Ever presume to sit above the salt. *Hall. Sat. 2. 6. 5.*

Warton reads the line thus,

Second that he do, *upon* no default.

I have nothing but a modern reprint at hand to refer to ; but have little doubt that Warton has been tampering with his text.<sup>1</sup> His motive for doing so is an obvious one. By changing the preposition he gets at once the orthodox

<sup>1</sup> [In the edition of 1753, it stands as Dr. Guest prints it.—W. W. S.]

number of syllables; though the accents still remain inflexible.

Ær | thon eng | la weard | : for of | erhyg | de.

*Cæd. Gen. 22.*

Gif | um grow | ende | : on god | es ric | e.

*Cæd. id. 88.*

Lif | es leoht | fruma | : on lid | es bos | me.

*Cæd. id. 1040.*

On | tha hat | an hell | : thurh hyg | eleas | te.

*Cæd. id. 331.*

Hit | gesæl | de gio | : on sum | e tid | e.

*Alf. Met. 26. 4.*

I sometime lay here in Corioli,

At | a poor | man's house | : he us'd | me kind | ly.

*Cor. 1. 9. 82.*

——— Let's to the sea-side, ho !

As well to see the vessel that's come in,

As | throw out | our eyes | : for brave | Othel | lo.<sup>1</sup>

*Oth. 2. 1. 36.*

——— Examples that may nourish

Neglect and disobedience in whole bodies—

Must not be play'd withal; nor out of pity

Make | a gen | eral | : forget | his du | ty.

*Fl. Bonduca, 4. 3.*

O | how come | ly' it is | : and how | reviv | ing.

*Samson, 1268.*

This lengthened verse forms the great staple of Chaucer's "Trochaic measure." The following "epigram" will serve as a specimen.

Cease | fond wretch | to love | : so oft | delud | ed,  
Still | made ritch | with hopes | : still un | reliev | ed,  
Now | fly her | delaies | : she, that | debat | eth,  
Feels | not true | desire | : he that |<sup>2</sup> defer | red  
Oth | ers time | attends | : his owne | betray | eth.  
Learn | t'affect | thyself | : thy cheekes | deform | ed  
With pale care, revive with timely pleasure;  
Or with scarlet heate them, or by painting  
Make thee lovely, for such arte she useth,  
Whom | in vayne | so long | : thy fol | ly lov | ed.

1 l : 1. was used by Chaucer and his school, and also by our dramatists. The lengthened verse was common in Anglo-Saxon ;

<sup>1</sup> [Read 'As to throw out,' as in the first folio.—W. W. S.]

<sup>2</sup> This is false accentuation, but was certainly intended by the author.

How longe, Juno, thurgh thy crueltee,  
Wilt | thou war|rein Theb|es : the | citee|.¹

*Chau. The Knights Tale; C. T. 1545.*

Hath not two beares in their fury and rage,  
Two | and for|tie chil|dren : rent | and torn|,  
For they the prophete Heliseus did scorne?

*Barclay. Schip of Foles, Of Mockers, st. 11.*

Al|exan|der I|den : that's | my name|.

2 *H. VI. 5. 1. 74.*

And thus do we of wisdom and of reach,  
By indirections find directions out,  
So | by for|mer lec|ture : and | advice|,²  
Shall you, my son.

*Hamlet, 2. 1. 64.*

Twelve | year since, | Miran|da : twelve | year since|,  
Thy father was the Duke of Milan.

*Temp. 1. 2. 53.*

Some late editors tell us to make the first *year* a dis-  
syllable;

Twelve ye|ar since, | Miran|da : twelve | year since|——

Thus | much for | your an|swer : for | yourselves|,  
Ye have lived the shame of women, die the better.

*Fletcher. Valentinian, 1. 2.*

—— Out!

Out | ye sluts|, ye fol|lies : from | our swords|

Filch our revenges basely? *Fletcher. Bonduca, 3. 5.*

Fletcher's editor, in 1778, adds a third *out*, which he has  
"no doubt was dropt by the compositor or transcriber ;"

—— Out!

Out, out | ye sluts | ye fol|lies, &c.

While | their hearts | were jo|cund : and | sublime|,  
Drunk with idolatry, &c.

*Samson, 1669.*

—— How reviving

To | the sp'rits | of just | men : long | oppress'd|.

*Samson, 1268.*

flu|gon forh|tigen|de : fær | onget|on. *Cæd. Exod. 452.*

hyht|lic heof|on-tim|ber : hol|mas dæl|de.

*Cæd. Gen. 146.*

¹ [But the reading *warrein* is false ; we must read *werreyen*, in three syllables.  
The line is perfectly regular.—W. W. S.]

² [But the Globe edition has "So by *my* former lecture," &c.—W. W. S.]



And | thurh of | ermet | to : eal | ra swith | ost.

*Cæd. Gen. 337.*

And | he eac | swa sam | e : eal | le mæg | ne.

*Alf. Met. 26. 64.*

Wul | dorsped | um wel | ig : wid | e stod | an.

*Cæd. Gen. 87.*

Ac | hi for | thæm yrm | thum : eard | es lys | te.

*Alf. Met. 26. 71.*

On | gesac | um swith | e : sel | fes mih | tum.

*Cæd. Gen. 59.*

heo | ra cyn | ecyn | nes : cuth | is wid | e.

*Alf. Met. 26. 42.*

Of | er heof | onstol | as : heag | um thrym | mum.

*Cæd. Gen. 8.*

Wol | don her | ebleath | e : ham | as fin | dan.

*Cæd. Exod. 453.*

O | fer la | gofod | e : leoht | with thys | trum.

*Cæd. Gen. 127.*

that | he God | e wol | de : geong | erdom | e.

*Cæd. id. 267.*

that | he God | e wol | de : geong | ra weorth | an.

*Cæd. id. 277.*

Cwæd | on that | heo ric | e : reth | e mod | e.

*Cæd. id. 47.*

Oth | thæt him | gelyf | de : leod | a un | rim.

*Alf. Met. 26. 40.*

Oth | thæt him | ne meah | te : mon | na æ | nig.

*Alf. id. 69.*

Is | this the | Lord Tal | bot : unc | le Glos | ter ?

*1 H. VI. 3. 4. 13.*

He shall not this day perish, if his passions

May | be fed | with mu | sic : are | they read | y ?

*Fletch. Mad Lover, 4. 1.*

1 l : 2. is common in Anglo-Saxon, but very rare in English ;

un | der eorth | an neoth | an : æl | mihtig God |.

*Cæd. Gen. 311.*

thon | ne cymth | on uh | tan : eas | terne wind |.

*Cæd. id. 315.*

wæs | thæs Job | es fæ | der : God | eac swa he |.

*Alf. Met. 26. 47.*

See | him pluck | Aufid | ius : down | by the hair |.

*Cor. 1. 3. 33.*

heow | on heath | olin | de : ham | era laf | um.

*Brunanburh Song, 6.*

Sith | than her | ewos | an : heof | on ofgæf | on.

*Cæd. Gen. 85.*

Of | thæm mod | e cum | ath : mon | na gehwyl | cum.  
*Alf. Met.* 26. 109.

Thæt | he to | his ear | de : æn | ige nys | te. *Alf. id.* 66.

Ac | he mid | thæm wif | e : wun | ode sith | than. *Alf. id.* 68.

A large proportion of Alfred's verses have the alliterative syllables thrown back to the very end of the section. The same peculiarity is sometimes met with in the works of Cædmon and other Anglo-Saxon poets. This appears to me fatal to Rask's theory. If all the syllables, which occur before the alliterative syllable, form merely "a compliment," and take no accent, we shall have some hundreds of sections with only *one* accented syllable; a result which, according to Rask himself, is opposed to the very first principles of Anglo-Saxon verse.

11 : 5. was at no period common;

ælc | ne æf | ter oth | rum : for ec | ne God |. *Alf. id.* 50.

What | an al | tera | tion : of hon | our has |  
 Desperate want made! *T. of Athens,* 4. 3. 468.

But I am troubled here with them myself,

The rebels have assay'd to win the Tow'r—

But | get you | to Smith | field : and gath | er head |.  
*2 H. VI.* 4. 5. 8.

Thæs | the heo | ongun | non : with God | e win | nan.  
*Cæd. Gen.* 77.

The verse 2 : 1. is sometimes found lengthened in Anglo-Saxon, but is very rarely met with in English;

Thon | ne se hal | ga God | : hab | ban mih | te. *Cæd. Gen.* 270.

Wel | come, ye war | like Goths | : wel | come Lu | cius.  
*Tit. And.* 5. 3. 27.

2 : 2. is one of the standard verses of five accents, but was little favoured by Dryden and his school. Seldom as they use it, it is much more rarely that they use it happily. Its properties have been discussed at length in the opening of this chapter.

For the love of God, that for us alle died,  
 And as I may deserve it unto you,

What | shall this re | ceit cost <sup>1</sup> | ? : tel | leth me now |.  
*Chau. Chanones Yemannes Tale ; C. T.* 16821.

<sup>1</sup> Query, costs? [Yes, certainly; the line is quite regular, *telleth* being read as *tel'th*.—W. W. S.]

This mighty man, quoth he, whom you have slain,  
Of | an huge gi|antess |: whil|om was bred|. *F. Q.* 4. 8. 47.

And | for Mark An|tony |: think | not on him|. *Jul. Cæs.* 2. 1. 181.

There to converse with everlasting groans—  
Ag|es of hope|less end |: this | would be worse|. *P. L.* 2. 184.

———— He unobserved  
Home | to his moth|er's house |: priv|ate return'd|. *P. R.* 4. 638.

Is | the great chain | that draws |: all | to agree|. *Pope. Essay on Man*, 1. 33.

Brut|us is no|ble, wise |: val|iant and hon|est,  
Cæsar was migh|ty, bold |: roy|al and lov|ing. *Jul. Cæs.* 3. 1. 126.

Where | may she wan|der now |: whith|er betake | her? *Comus*, 351.

2 : 5. was well known in Anglo-Saxon, and has always been among the standard verses of five accents.

Læd|de ofer lag|u stream |: sæt lon|ge thær|. *Alf. Met.* 26. 16.

He | tha gefe|r|de |: thurh feon|des creæft|. *Cæd. Gen.* 453.

A Frankelein was in this compaynie,  
White was his berd, as is the dayesie,  
Of | his complex|ion |: he was | sanguin|,  
Wel loved he by the morwe a sop in win. *Chau. Prol.* 333.

And | the world's vic|tor stood |: subdued | by sound|. *Pope. Essay on Criticism*, 381.

wer|ige wun|edon |: and we|an cuth|on. *Cæd. Gen.* 74.

hear|ran to hab|bane |: ic mæg | mid han|dum [swa fela]. *Cæd. Gen.* 279.

Short was his gown, with sleeves long and wide,  
Wel | conde he sit|te on hors |: and fair|e rid|e. *Chau. Prol.* 93.

One | that doth wear | himself |: away | in lone|ness. *Fletcher. Faith. Shep.* 1. 2.

Till | an unu|sual stop |: of sud|den si|lence. *Comus*, 552.

2 l: 1. is one of the standard verses of five accents.

Whil|om as ol|de stor|ies : tel|len us|,  
Ther was a duk, that highte Thesens.

*Chau. Knights Tale; C. T. 861.*

Then | shall man's pride | and dul|ness : com|prehend|  
His action's, passion's, being's, use and end.

*Pope's Essay on Man, i. 65.*

For | thæm he was | mid ri|te : ric|es hyr|de.

*Alf. Met. 26. 41.*

Give | not yourself | to lone|ness : and | those grac|es  
Hide from the eyes of men.

*Fl. Faith. Sheph. 1. 3.*

2 l: 2. seems to have been last patronised by Milton.

——— We're fellows still  
Serv|ing alike | in sor|row : leak'd | is our bark|,  
And we, poor mates, stand on the dying deck  
Hearing the surges threat.

*Timon of A. 4. 2. 19.*

I | shall remem|ber tru|ly : trust | me, I shall|.

*Fl. Loy. Subj. 1. 1.*

But | for that damn'd | magic|ian : let | him be girt|  
With all the grisly legions.

*Comus, 602.*

Nyl|e he æng|um an|um : eal|le gesyl|ian.

*Exeter MS. Christ. 683.*

2 l: 5. fell into disuse at the same time as the verse last mentioned.

Be't | as your Gods | will have | it : it on|ly stands|  
Our lives upon to use our strongest hands.

*A. and C. 2. 1. 50.*

Bet|ter at home | lie bed|-rid : not on|ly i|dle,  
Inglorious.

*Samson, 579.*

Come, | for the third, | Laer|tes : you do | but dal|ly.

*Hamlet, 5. 2. 308.*

——— Let other men  
Set up their bloods for sale, mine shall be ever  
Fair | as the soul | it car|ries : and un|chaste nev|er.

*Fletcher. Fa. Shep. 1. 3.*

2 l: 6 l. was not uncommon in our early English rhythms.

Cov|eiten not | in cun|tre : to cair|en about|e.

*P. Ploughman, A. prol. 29.*

2 ll : 1. may be found in some of our dramatists.

———— Nor caves nor secret vaults,  
No, nor the pow'r they serve, could keep these Christians  
Or | from my reach | or pun|ishment : but | thy mag|ic  
Still laid them open. *Massinger. Virgin Martyr*, 1. 1. 17.

The verses beginning with the sections 3. and 3 l. deserve attention, as being in the number of those which strikingly characterize the rhythm of Milton. To a modern ear the flow of these verses is far from pleasing, nor can I readily see what was their recommendation to one, whose ear was so delicately sensitive, unless it were that assigned in p. 220. Whatever might be the motive, he certainly employed them more profusely than any of his contemporaries.

3 : 1.

Tha | was wæst | mum aweaht | : world | onspreht |.  
*Riming Poem*, 9.

3 : 2.

How | if when | I am laid | : in | to the tomb |  
I wake before the time ——— ? *R. and J.* 4. 3. 30.

———— The mighty regencies  
Of seraphim and potentates and powers,  
In | their trip | le degrees | : re | gions to which |  
All thy dominion, Adam, is no more  
Than what this garden is to all the earth. *P. L.* 5. 750.

———— Both ascend  
In | the vis | ions of God | : It | was a hill |  
Of Paradise the highest ——— *P. L.* 11. 376.

Ir | recov | 'rably blind | : to | tal eclipse |. *Samson*, 81.

Fel | low, come | from the throng, | : look | upon Cæ | sar.  
*Jul. Cæs.* 1. 2. 21.

3 : 5. and 3 : 5 l.

This gud squier with Wallace bound to ryd . . .  
And Edward Litill his sister sone so der,  
Full | weill graith | it in-till | : thar ar | mour cler |.  
*Wallace*, 3. 51.

———— Or he decess,  
Mon | y thou | sand in feild | : sall mak | thar end |.  
*Wallace*, 2. 346.

Heg|eit, of | an huge|hicht|: with haw|thorne tre|is.

*Dunbar. Tua Maryit Wemen, 4.*

And eke wild roaring bulls he would him make  
To tame, and ride their backs, not made to bear,  
And | the roe|bucks in flight|: to o|vertake|.

*F. Q. 1. 6. 24.*

Who | then dares | to be half|: so kind | again|?  
For bounty, that makes Gods, does still mar men.

*Timon of A. 4. 2. 40.*

Lead | me to | the revolts|: of Eng|land here|.

*Kg. John, 5. 4. 7.*

——— Dominion hold

O|ver fish | of the sea|: and fowl | of th' air|.

*P. L. 7. 533.*

And for the testimony of truth, hast borne  
U|niver|sal reproach|: far worse | to bear|  
Than violence.

*P. L. 6. 33.*

——— I come thy guide

To | the gar|den of bliss|: thy seat | prepar'd|.

*P. L. 8. 298.*

Hoarse echo murmur'd to his words applause,  
Throug|h | the in|finite host|: nor less | for that|  
The flaming seraph fearless——

*P. L. 5. 872.*

——— From their blissful bow'rs

Of amarantine shade, fountain or spring,  
By | the wa|ters of life|: where'er | they sat|,  
In fellowships of joy, the sons of light  
Hasted.

*P. L. 11. 77.*

True image of the Father, whether thron'd  
In | the bos|om of bliss|: and light | of light|  
Conceiving, or remote from Heav'n——

*P. R. 4. 596.*

U|niver|sally crown'd|: with high|est prais|es.

*Samson Agon. 175.*

Milton used just as freely the verses that begin with the  
lengthened section.

31: 1.

This | Valer|ian correc|ted : as | God wolde|,  
Answerd again. *Chau. 2nd Nonnes Tale; C. T. 15630.* ✓

A stream of nectarous humour issuing flow'd  
San|guine, such | as celes|tial : spirits | may bleed|.

*P. L. 6. 332.*

Then to the desert takes with these his flight,  
Where still from shade to shade the son of God  
Af|ter for|ty days' fas|ting : had | remain'd|.

*P. R. 2. 241.*

Victory and triumph to the son of God,  
Now ent'ring his great duel, not of arms,  
But | to van|quish by wis|dom : hel|lish wiles|.

*P. R. 1. 173.*

—— Is this the man  
That | invin|cible Sam|son : far | renown'd|,  
The dread of Israel's foes—

*Samson Agon. 340.*

—— Can this be he,  
That heroic, that renown'd  
Ir|resis|tible Sam|son : whom | unarm|ed  
No strength of man or fiercest wild beast could withstand?  
*Samson Agon. 124.*

And through his side the last drops, ebbing slow,  
From the red gash, fall heavy, one by one,  
Like | the first | of a thun|der :-show'r|, and now |  
The arena swims around him. *Childe Harold, 4. 140.*

### 3 l: 2.

With gentle penetration, though unseen,  
Shoots | invis|ible vir|tue : e'en | to the deep|. *P. L. 3. 585.*

There are very few verses that begin with the section 4.  
Not only is its length unwieldy, but the very marked character of its rhythm prevents it from uniting readily with other sections. It is sometimes found in our old English alliterative poems ;

### 4 : 9 l.

Lov|ely lay | it a-long| : in his lone|ly den|ne.  
*William and the Werwolf, 20.*

### 4 l: 2.

Fra|grant all ful | of fresche o|dour : fyn|est of smell|. *Dunbar. Tua Maryit Wemen, 33.*

### 5 : 1. has always been rare.

This yellow slave—  
Will knit and break religions—place thieves  
And give them title, knee, and approbation  
With sen|'tors on | the bench| : this | is it|,  
That makes the wappened widow wed again.  
*Timon of A. 4. 3. 33.*

Whether to knock against the gates of Rome,  
 Or rudely visit them in parts remote,  
 To fright | them, ere | destroy. |: But | come in |,  
 Let me commend thee first to those, that shall  
 Say yea to thy desires. *Cor. 4. 5. 147.*

——— Love is not love,  
 When it is mingled with regards that stand  
 Aloof | from th' en | tire point |: will | you have | her?  
*Lear, 1. 1. 241.*

——— I defy thee,  
 Thou mock | -made man | of mat |: charge | home, sir | rah.  
*Fl. Bonduca, 4. 2.*

5:2. is one of the standard verses of five accents. ✓

A sher | eve had | de he been |: and | a contour |,  
 Was no wher swiche a worthy vavasour. *Chau. Prol. 361.*

Instruct | me, for | thou know'st, |: thou | from the first |  
 Wast present. *P. L. 1. 19.*

We can | not blame | indeed |: but | we may sleep |.  
*Pope. Essay on Criticism, 242.*

One fatal tree there stands, of knowledge called,  
 Forbid | den them | to taste |: know | ledge forbid | den ?  
*P. L. 4. 514.*

At Sessions ther was he lord and sire  
 Ful of | ten times | he was |: knight | of the shire |.  
*Chau. Prol. 357.*

5:5. is also one of the standard verses of five accents.

And though he holy were and vertuous,  
 He was | to sin | ful men |: not dis | pitous |.  
*Chau. Prol. 517.*

Learn hence | for an | cient rules |: a just | esteem |.  
*Pope's Ess. on Crit. 139.*

He dies | and makes | no sign |: O God | forgive | him.  
*2 H. VI. 3. 3. 29.*

The fel | lows of | his crime |: the fol | low'rs rath | er.  
*P. L. 1. 606.*

The following is an instance of the verse 5:5 ll.

Will you permit that I shall stand condemn'd  
 A wan | d'ring vag | abond |: my rights | and roy | alties  
 Plucked from my arms perforce? *R. II. 2. 3. 119.*



5 : 6. was seldom used after the fifteenth century.

The faithful love that dyd us both combyne,  
In mariage and peassable concorde,  
Into your handes here I cleane resigne  
To be | bestowed | upon | : your chil | dren and mine |.  
*Sir T. More. Riful Lament.*

And was | a big | bold barn | : and brem | e of his ag | e.  
*William and the Werwolf, 18.*

And whan | it was | out went | : so wel | hit him lik | ed.  
*Same, 28.*

5 : 10. is very rare.

———— Kath'rine the curst,  
A ti | tle for | a maid | : of all ti | tles the worst |.  
*Tam. of the Shrew, 1. 2. 129.*

5 l : 1. is one of the standard verses of five accents.

✓ Befel that in that season, on a day  
In South | wark at | the Tab | ard : as | I lay | —  
*Ch. Prol. 19.*

These leave the sense, their learning to display,  
And those | explain | the mean | ing : quite | away |.  
*Pope's Ess. on Criticism, 116.*

———— From every shires ende  
Of Englelond to Canterbury they wende  
The ho | ly blis | ful mar | tyr : for | to sek | e. *Chau. Prol. 15.*

———— His greedy wish to find,  
His wish | and best | advan | tage : us | asun | der.  
*P. L. 9. 257.*

5 l : 2. and 5 l : 5. were seldom used after the time of Milton.

Till now you have gone on and fill'd the time  
With all | licen | tious meas | ure : mak | ing your will |  
The scope of Justice. *Timon of A. 5. 4. 3.*

I heard | thee in | the gar | den : and | of thy voice |  
Afraid, being naked, hid myself— *P. L. 10. 116.*

Obey | and be | atten | tive : canst | thou remem | ber  
A time before we came into this cell ? *Temp. 1. 2. 38.*

5 *l.*: 5.

——— Thou and I

Have for|ty miles | to ride | yet : ere din|ner time|. <sup>1</sup>*1 Hen. IV. 3. 3. 222.*For in | those days | might on|ly : shall be | admir'd|. <sup>2</sup>*P. L. 11. 689.*

——— And from work

Now res|ting, bless'd | and hal|low'd : the sev|enth day|. <sup>2</sup>*P. L. 7. 591.*

The morn|ing comes | upon | us : we'll leave | you, Bru|tus.

*Jul. Cæs. 2. 1. 221.*

——— Began

To loathe | the taste | of sweet|ness : whereof | a lit|tle

More than a little, is by much too much. *1 Hen. IV. 3. 2. 71.*

5 *l.*: 6 *l.* is met with in the old English alliterative rhythms.

For son|e thu | bist lad|lic : and lad | to iseon|ne.

*Grave-Song, 42.*

In hab|ite as | an her|mite : unho|ly of work|es.

*P. Ploughman, B. prol. 3.*

I slom|bred in | a slep|yng : it swey|ved so mer|y.

*P. Ploughman, id. 10.*

Verses that begin with the section 5 *ll.* are met with, not only in the tumbling verse, but occasionally also in our dramatists. They give a loose and slovenly character to the rhythm, and were very properly rejected by Spenser, and by Milton.

5 *ll.*: 1.Who wears | my stripes | impress'd | on him : who | must bear|  
My beating to the grave. <sup>2</sup>*Cor. 5. 5. 108.*5 *ll.*: 2.

It may | be I | will go | with you : but yet | I'll pause|.

*Rich. II. 2. 3. 168.*

A sov|'reign shame | so el|bows him : his own | unkind|ness.

*Lear, 4. 3. 44.*<sup>1</sup> [Printed as *prose* in the Globe edition.—W. W. S.]<sup>2</sup> [In the Globe edition the lines are differently divided.]

Verses beginning with the sections 6. 6 *l*. 6 *u*. were rarely used even by our dramatists. Byron, whose negligent versification has never yet been properly censured, has given us one or two examples of the verse 6 : 2. To slip a verse of this kind into a modern poem, is little better than laying a trap for the reader.

6 : 2.

I have so much endur'd, so much endure,  
Look on | me, the grave | hath not | : chang | 'd thee mor | e  
Than I am chang'd for thee. *Byron. Manfred, 2. 4.*

6 : 5.

And there | by the hand | of God | : he was | prostrate |.  
*M. for M. Flodden Field, 18.*

He conquered all the regne of feminie,  
That whilom was ycleped Scythia,  
And wed | ded the fresh | e quene | : Ippol | ita | .<sup>1</sup>  
*The Knights Tale, l. 8.*

The sen | ate hath sent | about | : three sev | eral quests |  
To search you out. *Othello, 1. 2. 46.*

6 : 6.

And man | y a dead | ly stroke | : on them | there did light |.  
*M. for M. Flodd. Field, 9.*

6 *u* : 6 *l*.

Qui loq | uitur tur | piloq | uium : is Lu | ciferes hin | e.  
*P. Ploughman, B. prol. 39.*

Verses beginning with the sections 7. and 7 *l*. are very rarely met with, except in the old English alliterative metre.

7 : 6.

With that, | in haist | to the hege | : so hard | I inthrang |.  
*Dunbar. Tua Maryit Wemen, 13.*

Quhairon | ane bird | on ane bransche | : so birst | out hir not | is.  
*Same, 5.*

<sup>1</sup> [This line is so execrably harsh that an error may be suspected. Accordingly, we find that *freshe* is an insertion of Tyrwhitt's, due to the fact that he was unaware that *weddede* was trisyllabic. Read—And wed | dede | the quene | Ippol | ita. —W. W. S.]

71 : 2 l.

Apon | the mid | sumer év | en : mir | riest of nich | tis.

*Dunbar. Tua Maryit Wemen, 1.*

71 : 6 l.

The hel | ewag | as beoth lag | e : sid-wag | as unheg | e.

*Grave-Song, 17.*

To hav | e a ly | cence and lev | e : at Lon | don to dwel | le.

*Piers Ploughman, B. prol. 85.*

Verses beginning with the section 8. are no less rare than those which begin with section 4. They must of necessity approach close on the confines of the triple measure; but verses belonging to that measure would, in most cases, be of a most unwieldy length, if they contained five accents. They are, however, occasionally found in the alliterative metre, and there are some very curious specimens in the Anglo-Saxon poem, called The Traveller.

81 : 1 U.

Mid Wen | lum ic wæs | and mid Wær | num : and | mid Wic | ingum.

*Song of the Traveller, 59.*Mid Seax | um ic wæs | and mid Syc | gum : and | mid Sweord | -  
werum.*Song of the Trav. 62.*

Mid Fronc | um ic wæs | and mid Frys | um : and | mid Frum | tingum.

*Song of the Trav. 68.*

Mid Eng | lum ic wæs | and mid Swæf | um : and | mid Æn | enum.

*Song of the Trav. 61.*Mid Rug | um ic wæs | and mid Glom | mum : and | mid Rum | -  
walum.*Song of the Trav. 69.*

Mid Creac | um ic wæs | and mid Fin | num : and | mid Cæs | ere.

*Song of the Trav. 76.*

8 U : 1 U.

Mid Gef | thum ic wæs | and mid Win | edum : and | mid Gef | -  
flegum.*Song of the Trav. 60.*

8 U : 6.

Of fals | nesse of fas | ting of les | inges : of vow | es ybroke | .<sup>1</sup>*P. Ploughman, B. prol. 71.*

<sup>1</sup> [This line is certainly corrupt in this form. It was perhaps derived from some very inferior MS., which has the words of *lesinges* inserted. No good MS. inserts them; see P. Plowman, A. prol. 68, B. prol. 71, C. i. 69.—W. W. S.]

Verses beginning with the section 9. form a very slovenly rhythm, but are occasionally found in the works of our dramatists.

9 : 5.

'Tis a won|der by | your leave| : she will | be tam'd | so.

*T. of the Shrew, 5. 2. 189.*

9 l : 1.

———— Like an arrow shot

From a well-|exper|ienced ar|cher : hits | the mark |

His eye doth level at——

*Per. 1. 1. 163.*

———— [We] gave way unto your clusters

Who did hoot | him out | o' th' cit|y : But | I fear |

They'll roar him in again.

*Cor. 4. 6. 122.*

## CHAPTER VI.

## VERSE OF SIX ACCENTS.

FORMERLY the verse of six accents was the one most commonly used in our language; but for the last three centuries it has been losing ground, and is now merely tolerated, as affording a convenient pause in a stave, or as sometimes yielding the pleasure of variety.

The place it once filled in English literature would give it some degree of importance, even though it had never been one of our *classical* rhythms; but its importance is greatly increased, when we recollect the period when it most flourished, and the writers by whom it was chiefly cultivated. Poems in this metre ushered in the æra of Elizabeth; and no one can look with other feelings than respect upon the favourite rhythm of a Howard, a Sidney, and a Drayton.

The verse of six accents is frequently met with in our Anglo-Saxon poems, and also in the alliterative poems of the fourteenth century. But the psalm-metres were chiefly instrumental in rendering it familiar to the people; and doubtless gave it that extraordinary popularity, which for a time threw into the shade all the other metres of our language.

It must, however, be acknowledged, that our verse of six accents is much inferior to the verse of five. Though of greater length, its rhythm has a narrower range, and a flow much more tame and monotonous. Its pause admits little change of position, and though in the number of its *possible* varieties it equals the verse of five accents, yet many of these have a length so inconvenient, as to render them very unfit for any practical purpose. It is also more difficult to follow a diversified rhythm in the section of three,

than in the shorter section of two accents. A verse, therefore, which admits only the former, cannot safely allow the same license to the rhythm, as one which contains the latter. Accordingly, our metre of six accents departs in very few instances from the strictest law of the common measure.

The name of *Alexandrine* has been given to this verse, not only in our own, but also in foreign countries. The origin of the term has been questioned; but I see little reason to doubt the common opinion, which traces it to the French Romance of Alexander. This once famous "Geste" was the work of several authors, some of whom were English. Its verse in many respects resembles the modern French Alexandrine, but always contains six accents.

Of late years the Alexandrine has kept a place in English literature, chiefly by its introduction into our heroic verse. This intermixture of rhythms was unknown to Chaucer, and seems to have been mainly owing to the influence of the tumbling metre. The poets of the seventeenth century introduced the Alexandrine, sometimes singly, sometimes in couplets or triplets, and in some cases used it for whole passages together. It would be difficult to defend this practice, on any sound principles of criticism; but the intrusive verses are occasionally introduced so happily, the change of rhythm is so well adapted to change of feeling or of subject, that criticism will probably be forgotten in the pleasure of the reader. On this ground, the following passage seems to me to have a fair claim on the forbearance of the critic, though it will hardly meet with his approval. Sheffield thus describes, or rather professes his inability to describe, the nature of *genius*.

A spirit which inspires the work throughout,  
 As that of nature moves the world about;  
 A flame that glows amidst conceptions fit  
 Ev'n something of divine, and more than wit;  
 Itself unseen, yet all things by it shown,  
 Describing all men, but described by none.  
 Where dost thou dwell? What caverns of the brain  
 Can such a vast and mighty thing contain?  
 When I, at vacant hours, in vain thy absence mourn,  
 Oh, where dost thou retire? And why dost thou return

Sometimes with powerful charms to hurry me away,  
From pleasures of the night, and business of the day?

*Essay on Poetry, l. 21.*

The writers of our old English alliterative metre used the Alexandrine with the utmost freedom, as also did our dramatists; but it was rejected by Milton, and has ever since been considered as alien to the spirit of English blank verse.

Verses of six accents beginning with the section 1, are rarely found, except in our Anglo-Saxon poems, and the works of our dramatists; Milton, however, has occasionally used them in his Samson.

1 : 1. is well known to the Anglo-Saxon, but is hardly ever met with in English verse.

heah | -cýning | es hæc | : him | was hal | ig leoht |.

*Cæd. Gen. 124.*

thurh | his an | es cræft | : of | er oth | re forth |.

*Exeter MS. Christ, 685.*

him | seo wen | geleaf | : sith | than wal | dend his |.

*Cæd. Gen. 49.*

Hath | he ask'd | for me | ? Know | you not | he has | ?

*Mach. 1. 7. 30.*

of | er rum | ne grund | : rath | e wæs | gefyl | led.

*Cæd. Gen. 123.*

Tha | seo tid | gewat | : of | er tib | er sceac | an.

*Cæd. id. 135.*

Ne | wæs her | tha giet | : nym | the heol | sterscead | o.

*Cæd. id. 103.*

By alternating the verse 1 : 1. with the common heroic verse, Campion formed what he calls his elegiac metre. It seems to have been his intention to imitate the rhythm of Latin elegy; if so, the attempt must be considered as a failure.

Constant to none, but ever false to me ! \*

Trai | ter still | to love | : through | thy false | desires |,

Not hope of pittie now, nor vain redress

Turns | my grief | to tears | : and | rénu'd | laments |,

So well thy empty vowes and hollow thoughts



Wit|nes both | thy wrongs|: and | remorse|les hart|—  
 None canst thou long refuse, nor long affect,  
 But | turn'st feare | with hope|: sor|row with | delight|,  
 Delaying and deluding ev'ry way  
 Those | whose eyes | were once|: with | thy beau|ty charm'd|.

1 : 2. is also rare.

Whose mention were alike to thee as lieve  
 As | a catch|polls fist|: un|to a bank|rupts sleeve|.  
*Hall. Sat. 4. 2. 81.*

O | ye Gods | ye Gods|: must | I endure | all this|?  
*Jul. Cæs. 4. 3. 41.*

Well, | what rem|edy|? : Fen|ton, Heav'n give | thee joy|.  
*M. W. of Windsor, 5. 5. 250.*

The verse 1 : 5. is somewhat more common.

Take pomp from prelatis, magistee from kingis,  
 Sol|emne cir|cumstance|: from all | these world|lye thingis|,  
 We walke awrye, and wander without light,  
 Confoundinge all to make a chaos quite. *Puttenham. Parth.*

O | despite|ful love|: uncon|stant wom|ankind|!  
*T. of the Shrew, 4. 2. 14.*

Saf|er shall | he be|: upon | the san|dy plains|  
 Than where castles mounted stand. *1 H. VI. 1. 4. 39.*

We'll | along | ourselves|: and meet | them at | Philip|pi.  
*Jul. Cæs. 4. 3. 225.*

Vir|tue, as | I thought|: truth, du|ty, so | enjoining.  
*Samson Agon. 870.*

Verses beginning with the lengthened section are more commonly met with. The verse 1 l. 1. was used as late as the 16th century.

And | thurh of|ermet|to : soh|ton oth|er land|.  
*Cæd. Gen. 332.*

——— Gan enquire

What stately building durst so high extend  
 Her lofty tow'rs, unto the starry sphere,  
 And | what un|known na|tion : there | empeo|pled were|.  
*F. Q. 1. 10. 56.*

Let | me be | record|ed : by | the right|eous Gods|,  
 I am as poor as you. *T. of A. 4. 2. 4.*

The Duke of Suffolk is the first, and claims  
 To be high Steward; next the Duke of Norfolk  
 He | to be | Earl Mar|shal : you | may read | the rest |.

*H. VIII. 4. 1. 17.*

Set | te sig | eas | e : on | tha sweart | an hel | le.  
*Cæd. Gen. 312.*

Gif | he to | thæm ric | e : wæs | on riht | te bor | en.  
*Alfred. Met. 26. 46.*

He | nom Sum | erset | e : and | he nom | Dorset | e.  
*Layamon, 21013.*

And | tha men | within | nen : oht | liche | agun | nen.  
*Layamon, 21033.*

——— These evils I deserve; and more,  
 Acknowledge them from God inflicted on me  
 Just | ly, yet | despair | not : of | his fin | al par | don.  
*Samson Agon. 1169.*

1 l. 5. is met with in the Anglo-Saxon, and also in the old English alliterative poems.

hæf | don heor | a hlaf | ord : for thon | e heh | stan God |.  
*Alfred. Met. 26. 44.*

On | tha deop | an da | lo : thær he | to deof | le wearth |.  
*Cæd. Gen. 305.*

Heh | ste with | tham her | ge : ne mih | ton hyg | eas | e.  
*Cæd. id. 51.*

Ræd | an on | this ric | e : swa me | that riht | ne thinc | eth.  
*Cæd. id. 289.*

And | hi wil | tun scir | e : mid with | ere | ingrat | te.  
*Layamon, 21017.*

Gif | me mot | ilas | ten : that lif | a mir | e breos | ten.  
*Layamon, 21087.*

Ther | lai the | Kaiser | e : and Col | grim his | iver | e.  
*Layamon, 21039.*

High | ed to | the high | e : bot het | erly | thay wer | e.  
*Gaw. and the Green Knight, 1152.*

In | a som | er ses | on : when sof | te was | the sun | ne.<sup>1</sup>  
*P. Ploughman, B. prol. 1.*

Verses, which begin with the sections 2. and 2 l. have

<sup>1</sup> [I scan it otherwise; the adjective is *soft*, not *softe*. We then have—In a som | er ses | on : when soft | was the sun | ne. I make only *four* accents, not *six*; or, if we accent *In*, there are *five*.—W. W. S.]

been widely used in English poetry. Some of their varieties have survived in modern usage.

2 : 1. is found in our dramatists.

Was | not that no|bly done|: ay, | and wise|ly too|.

*Macb.* 3. 6. 14.

How long should I be, ere I should put off

To | the lord Chanc|ellors tomb|: or<sup>1</sup> | the She|riffs posts|.

*Ben Jonson. E. Man out of his Humour*, 3. 3.

——— This young Prince had the ordering

(To crown his father's hopes) of all the army—

Fash|ion'd and drew | em up|: but<sup>1</sup> | alas | so poor|ly,

So raggedly and loosely, so unsoldier'd,

The good Duke blush'd.

*Fletcher. Loy. Subj.* 1. 1.

But if there can be virtue, if that name

Be any thing but name and empty title,

If | it be so | as fools|: have<sup>1</sup> | been pleas'd | to feign it,

A pow'r that can preserve us after ashes——

*Fletcher. Valentinian*, 1. 1.

2 : 2. is still common.

Both | for her no|ble blood|: and | for her ten|der youth|.

*F. Q.* 1. 1. 50.

——— Throw out our eyes for brave Othello,

Ev'n | till we make | the main|: and | the aer|ial blue|

An indistinct regard.

*Othello*, 2. 1. 38.

The verse 2 : 5, like the last, is used even at the present day.

And | by his on|ly ayde|: preserv'de | our princ|es right|.

*M. for M. Flodd. Fielde*, 24.

Ban|ish'd from liv|ing wights|: our wear|y days | we waste|.

*F. Q.* 1. 2. 42.

Whi|ther the souls | do fly|: of men | that live | amiss|.

*F. Q.* 1. 2. 19.

Where | they should live | in woe|: and die | in wretch|edness|.

*F. Q.* 1. 5. 46.

Then | by main force | pull'd up|: and on | his shoul|ders bore|

The gates of Azza.

*Samson Agon.* 146.

Knych|tis ar kow|hubis|: and com|monis pluk|kit craw|is.

*Gaw. Doug. Prol. to 8 Eneid*, st. 7.

<sup>1</sup> [I should put *no* accent on these words.—W. W. S.]

So | did that squire | his foes |: disperse | and drive | asun|der.  
*F. Q. 6. 5. 19.*

Yet | were her words | but wind |: and all | her tears | but wat|er.  
*F. Q. 6. 6. 42.*

Upon the British coast, what ship yet ever came,  
 That not of Plymouth hears, where those brave navies lie,  
 From cannons' thund'ring throats, that all the world defy,  
 Which | to invas|ive spoil |: when th' En|glish list | to draw|,  
 Have check'd Iberia's pride, and held her oft in awe?  
*Drayton's Polyolbion, Song 1.*

The verse which follows appears to be doubly lengthened ;

We have this hour a constant will to publish  
 Our daughters' sev'ral dow'rs, that future strife  
 May | be preven|ted now |: the princ|es France | and Bur|gundy  
 Long in our court have made their am'rous sojourn.  
*Lear, 1. 1. 44.*

#### VERSES BEGINNING WITH THE SECTION 2 l.

Johnson has given it as his opinion that the Alexandrine "invariably requires a break at the sixth syllable." This, he tells us, is a rule which the modern French poets never violate; and he censures Dryden's negligence in having so ill observed it. But the French and English Alexandrines have little in common save the name, and to reason from the properties of the one to the properties of the other, is very unsafe criticism. The former may have four, five, or six accents; the latter never has less than six. In the number of their syllables they approach more nearly to each other; but their pauses are regulated by very different laws. The English pause<sup>1</sup> divides the *accents* equally, but the French pause has frequently two on one side, and three on the other. Again, in French the pause must divide the *syllables* equally, but not necessarily so in English. Johnson's acquaintance with the English Alexandrine seems to have been very limited; in one place he even represents it as the invention of Spenser.

Dryden only followed the last mentioned poet, in using

<sup>1</sup> This observation does not apply to those verses of six accents, which contain a *compound* section; see ch. 7. But such rhythms have long since been obsolete.

Alexandrines beginning with a lengthened section. Such verses are also found in every page of our dramatists; and are full as common in the works of our earlier poets. Pope seems to have imitated Drayton in rejecting them; and as Johnson formed all his notions of rhythmical proportion in the school of Pope, we have an easy clue to the criticism, which gave rise to these observations.

2 l : 1.

hwæt | sceal ic win|nan cwæth | he : nis | me wi|h|te thearf.  
*Cæd. Gen. 278.*

Rapt | in eter|nal si|lence : far | from en|emies|. *F. Q. 1. 1. 41.*

Up | to the hill | by He|bron : seat | of gi|ants old|. *Samson Agon. 148.*

2 l : 5 l.

Lis|ta and tha|ra la|ra : he let | heo that | land bu|an.  
*Cæd. Gen. 239.*

The sections 3. and 3 l. but seldom open an English verse, whatever be the number of its accents. When there are six accents, such a verse is rarely, if ever, met with after the 15th century.

3 : 1.

Swa | mec hyht|-giefu heold| : hyg|e dryht | befeold|. *Riming Poem, 21.*

3 : 5 l.

Wen|te forth | in here way| : with man|y wis|e tal|es.  
*P. Ploughman, B. prol. 48.*

This | was heor|e ibeot| : ar heo | to Bath|e com|en.  
*Layamon, 21029.*

3 l : 1 l. [Rather, 3 l : 5 l.]

I | was wer|y forwan|dred : [and] wen|te me | to res|te.  
*P. Ploughman, B. prol. 7.*

3 l : 3.

Mon|y mar|vellus mat|er : nev|er mark|it nor ment|. *Gaw. Douglas. Prol. to 8 Æneid, st. 14.*

He | nom al|le tha lon|des : in | to thæ|re sæ-*stron|de.*<sup>1</sup>  
*Layamon, 21019.*

<sup>1</sup> [This can hardly be right; the syllable *sæ*, our *sea*, must have been accented. At the same time, the accent on *tæ* was very slight, as is shown by its omission

Verses beginning with the sections 5. and 5 l. are by far the most common of our modern Alexandrines. They are also well known in old English poetry, but are rare in Anglo-Saxon.

5:1.

I know | you're man | enough |: mould | it to | just ends |.

*Fletcher. Loy. Subj. 1. 3.*

5:2.

Such one | was I | delness |: first | of this com | pany |.

*F. Q. 1. 4. 20.*

To gaze | on earth | ly wight |: that | with the night | durst ride |.

*F. Q. 1. 5. 32.*

Then gins | her griev | ed ghost |: thus | to lament | and mourn |.

*F. Q. 1. 7. 21.*

Or by the girdles grasp'd, they practice with the hip,  
The forward, backward falls, the mar, the turn, the trip,  
When stript into their shirts each other they invade,  
Within | a spa | cious ring |: by | the behol | ders made |.

*Drayton. Polyolbion, Song 1.*

Which men | enjoy | ing sight |: oft | without cause | complain |.

*Samson Agon. 157.*

This and much more, much more than twice all this  
Condemns | you to | the death |: see | them deliv | er'd o | ver  
To execution.

*R. II. 3. 1. 28.*

The dominations, royalties, and rights  
Of this | oppress | ed boy : This | is thy el | dest son's | son  
Inf fortunate in nothing but in thee.

*K. John, 2. 1. 176.*

5:3. is only found in old English.

I muv | it furth | allane |: neir | as mid | nicht was past |.

*Dunbar. Tua Maryit Wemen, 2.*

Quod he | and drew | me doun |: derne | in dolf | by ane dyk |.<sup>1</sup>

*Gaw. Doug. Prol. to Æneid 8, st. 13.*

in the later MS. of the poem. I therefore read : into thae | re as | -strond | e.—W. W. S.]

<sup>1</sup> [I scan the line differently. It can be shewn that the phrase *quod he* is often unaccented, forming no real part of the line. Hence the *cæsura* comes after *derne*; as thus :

Quod he—and drew | me doun | derne |: in dolf | by ane dyk |.—W. W. S.]

His seel | schulde nought | be sent | : to<sup>1</sup> | decey | ve the pe | ple.  
*P. Ploughman, B. prol. 79.*

5 : 5.

O who | does know | the bent | : of wom | an's fan | tasy | ?  
*F. Q. 1. 4. 24.*

In shape | and life | more like | : a mon | ster than | a man | .  
*F. Q. 1. 4. 22.*

He cast | about | and search'd | : his bale | ful books | again | .  
*F. Q. 1. 2. 2.*

And hel | mets hew | en deep | : shew marks | of ei | thers might | .  
*F. Q. 1. 5. 7.*

This is the verse, which Drayton used in the *Polyolbion*. Other varieties are occasionally introduced, but rarely—too rarely, it may be thought, to diversify the tameness and monotony of the metre. Of the sixteen verses which open the poem, fifteen belong to the present rhythm; yet, notwithstanding this iterated cadence, there is something very pleasing in their flow. Much of this, however, may arise from mere association.

Of Al | bion's glo | rious isle | : the won | ders whilst | I write | ,  
 The sun | dry var | ying soils | : the pleas | ures in | finite | ,  
 Where heat | kills not | the cold | : nor cold | expels | the heat | ,  
 The calms | too mild | ly small | : nor winds | too rough | ly great | ,  
 Nor night | doth hin | der day | : nor day | the night | doth wrong | ,  
 The sum | mer not | too short | : the win | ter not | too long | —  
 What help | shall I | invoke | : to aid | my muse | the while | ?  
 Thou gen | ius of | the place | : this most | renown | ed isle | ,  
 Which liv | edst long | before | : the all | -earth-drown | ing flood | ,  
 Whilst yet | the earth | did swarm | : with her | gigan | tic brood | ,  
 Go thou | before | me still | : thy cir | cling shores | about | ,  
 And in | this wand | 'ring maze | : help to | conduct | me out | ;  
 Direct | my course | so right | : as with | thy hand | to show |  
 Which way | thy for | ests range | : which way | thy riv | ers flow | ;  
 Wise gen | ius ! by | thy help | : that so | I may | descry |  
 How thy fair mountains stand, and how thy vallies lie.

*Drayton's Polyolbion. Song 1.*

The lengthened verse was also common.

So long | as these | two arms | : were a | ble to | be wrok | en.  
*F. Q. 6. 2. 7.*

<sup>1</sup> [I should put *no* accent on *to*.—W. W. S.]

And drove | away | the stound | : which mor | tally | attach'd | him.  
*F. Q. 6. 3. 10.*

Oft fur | nishing | our dames | : with In | dia's rar'st | devic | es,  
 And lent | us gold | and pearl | : rich silks | and dain | ty spic | es.  
*Drayton, Polyolbion, Song 1.*

Verses beginning with the lengthened section, were common till the end of the seventeenth century. Drayton, however, rejected them, and they were proscribed by Johnson.

Some spa | ris no | thir spirit | ual : spous | it wyf | nor ant | .  
*Gaw. Douglas. Prol. to 8 Eneid, st. 4.*

A may | ny of | rude vil | layns : made | hym for | to blede | .  
*Skelton's Elegy, 46.*

Whose sem | blance she | did car | ry : un | der feig | ned show | .  
*F. Q. 1. 1. 46.*

But pin'd | away | in ang | uish : and | self-will'd | annoy | .  
*F. Q. 1. 6. 17.*

More ug | ly shape | yet nev | er : liv | ing crea | ture saw | .  
*F. Q. 1. 8. 48.*

And oft | to groan | with bil | lows : beat | ing from | the main | .  
*F. Q. 4. 12. 5.*

—— Whom unarm'd  
 No strength | of man | , or fierc | est : wild | beast, could | withstand | .  
*Samson, 126.*

And with | paternal thun | der : vin | dicates her crown | .  
*Dryden. Hind and Panther, 1109.*

The last verse is the one specially objected to by Johnson.

5 l : 3 l.

And wer | eden | tha rich | e : with | than stron | ge Childrich | e.  
*Layamon, 21037.*

5 l : 5. like all those verses, which have a supernumerary syllable in the middle, was rarely used after the fifteenth century. It was, however, sometimes met with in our dramatists.



Of drev|illing | and drem|ys : what do|ith to | endyte|? <sup>1</sup>

*Gaw. Doug. Prol. Æneid 8, l. 1.*

Full rud | and ry|ot ress|onis : baith roun|dalis | and ryme|.

*Same, st. 6.*

Na la|bour list | they luk | till : thare luff|is are | byrd-lyme|.

*Same, st. 6.*

Yet sham|fully | they slew | hym : that shame | mot them | befal|.

*Skelton's Elegy, 49.*

And furth | he wul|de bug|en : and Bath|en al | belig|gen.

*Layamon, 21025.*

Ah swa | me hæ|pen drih|ten : thæ scop | thæs dæi|es lih|ten.

*Layamon, 21073.*

Despise | me if | I do | not : Three great | ones of | the cit|y,

In personal suit to make me his lieutenant,

Off-capp'd to him.

*Othello, 1. 1. 8.*

Verses beginning with the sections 6 and 6 *l.* are found in the old English alliterative metre.

6 : 1.

Quha spor|tis thame on | the spray|: spar|is for | na space|.

*Gaw. Douglas. Prol. to 8 Æneid, st. 3.*

6 : 6 *l.*

As an|cres and here|mites|: that hol|de hem in | here sel|les.

*P. Ploughman, B. prol. 28.*

That Na|ture ful no|bilie|: annam|ilit fine | with flou|ris.

*Dunbar. Tua Maryit Wemen, 31.*

6 : 9 *l.*

So glit|terit as | the gold|: wer thair glor|ius | gilt tres|sis.

*Dunbar, id. 19.*

6 *l.* : 5.

Syth Char|ite hath | be chap|man : and chef | to schryv|e lord|es.

*P. Ploughman, B. prol. 64.*

Unclos|ed the ken|el dore|: and cal|de hem | ther-out|e.

*Gaw. and the Green Knight, 1140.*

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<sup>1</sup> [I adopt the reading of Mr. Small's edition, and scan the line differently, thus:

Of dref|ling and drem|is : what dow | it to endyt?|—W. W. S.]

In the same metre may also be found verses beginning with the sections 7. and 7 l.

7 : 1 l.

The brem|e buk|kes also|: with| her brod|e paum|es.  
*Gaw. and the Green Knight, 1155.*

By that| that an|y day-lyght|: lem|ed up|on erth|e.  
*Gaw. and the Green Knight, 1137.*

I seigh| a tour| on a toft|: trie|lich yma|ked.  
*P. Ploughman, B. prol. 14.*

7 : 3 l.

And get|en gold| with here gle|: sin|fullich|e y trow|e.  
*P. Ploughman, A. prol. 34.*

7 : 5.

So thoeh|tis thret|is in thra|: our bres|tis o|ver-thwort|.  
*Gaw. Doug. Prol. to 8 Æneid, st. 2.*

The schip|man schrenk|is the schour|: and set|tith to| the schore|. <sup>1</sup>  
*Gaw. Doug. id. st. 5.*

With such| a crak|kande cry|: as klif|fes had|den brus|ten|.  
*Gaw. and the Green Knight, 1166.*

Of al|le man|er of men|: the men|e and <sup>2</sup> | the rich|e.  
*P. Ploughman, A. prol. 18.*

I drew| in derne| to the dyk|: to dirk|in ef|ter myrth|is.  
*Dunbar. Tua Maryit Wemen, 9.*

7 l : 1.

I wene| thou byd|dis na bet|ter : bot| I brek| thy brow|.  
*Gaw. Douglas. Prol. to 8 Æneid, st. 11.*

7 l : 2 l.

Ich wul|le wurth|liche wreke|en : al|le his with|er-ded|en.  
*Layamon, 21085.*

7 l : 3 l.

And sum|me put| hem to pryd|e : apar|ayleth| hem there af|tur.  
*P. Ploughman, B. prol. 23.*

7 l : 5 l.

Bot in|compe|tabill cler|gy : that Chris|tyndome| offend|is.  
*Gaw. Douglas. Prol. to 8 Æneid, st. 9.*

<sup>1</sup> [But Mr. Small's edition ends the line with "and settis to schore"; which is far better.—W. W. S.]

<sup>2</sup> [I put no accent on *and*.—W. W. S.]

Verses beginning with sections 8. and 8 l. are very rare. They are found, however, in the Song of the Traveller.

8 : 5 l.

That trav|yllis<sup>1</sup> thus | with thy boist<sup>2</sup> |: quhen bern|is with | the  
boud|is. *Gaw. Douglas, id. st. 10.*

8 l : 1 l.

Mid Hron|um ic wæs | and mid Dean|um : and | mid Heath|o-  
ream|um. *Trav. Song, 63.*

Mid Scot|tum ic wæs | and mid Peoh|tum : and | mid Scrid|e-  
Fin|num. *Trav. Song, 79.*

Verses beginning with sections 9. and 9 l. are also rare. Ben Jonson has used them once or twice in that strange medley of learning, coarseness, and extravagance, with which the three sycophants amuse the crafty epicure, their master. We have the verses 9 : 7. and 9 : 9. in the first four lines.

Now room for fresh gamfesters, who do will you to know,  
They do bring | you nei|ther play |: nor U|niver|sity show |;  
And therefore do intreat you, that whatsoever they rehearse  
May not fare | a whit | the worse |: for the false | pace of | the verse.  
*Ben Jonson. The Fox, l. 1.*

There are also verses in Piers Ploughman, which may be read, as if they began with the section 9. But I have doubts, if the custom, now so prevalent, of slurring over an initial accent, were practised at so early a period. If this license be allowed, we may give to the following line the rhythm 9 l : 2 l.

All in hop|e for | to hav|e : hev|ene-rich|e blis|se.  
*P. Ploughman, B. prol. 27.*

<sup>1</sup> [For *travyllis*, Mr. Small has *brautis*, obviously the right reading, as shown by the alliteration. This alters the run of the line.—W. W. S.]

<sup>2</sup> [For *boist*, Mr. Small has *host*. The right reading is obviously *boist*, i.e. boast.—W. W. S.]

## CHAPTER VII.

## VERSES WITH A COMPOUND SECTION.

THE origin of those sections which have more than three accents, has already been matter of discussion;<sup>1</sup> in the present chapter we shall consider them all as *compound*. This will enable us, at once, to double the range of our notation.

Every section of four, five, or six accents, may be represented as an Anglo-Saxon couplet; and if we add a *c* to the figures, which denote the rhythm, we shall be in no danger of confounding a compound section, with the couplet to which it probably owes its origin. Thus we may represent the section [in Cædmon, Gen. 245]

Then | den heo | his hal | ige word |

by the formula 1 : 6. *c*.—assuming that the middle pause of the *couplet* followed after the third syllable. I have already stated my belief, that the hypothesis, which has been started, as to the nature and origin of these compound sections is the true one; but whether true or false, there can be little doubt as to the *convenience* of the notation.

## VERSES OF SIX ACCENTS

may be ranged under two heads, accordingly as they begin or end with the compound section. Those which belong to the latter class are rare in Anglo-Saxon; but common in our psalm metres, and all those rhythms which

<sup>1</sup> See B. 2. ch. 1, 3, and 4.

were derived from, or influenced by them. They are, however, seldom met with after the sixteenth century.<sup>1</sup>

1 : 6. c : 1 l.

———— Heo wæron leof gode  
Then|den heo | his hal|ige word|: heal|dan wol|don.

———— They were dear to God,  
While they his holy word would keep. *Cædmon. Gen. 244.*

2 l : 1 ll. c : 6.

———— No man ys wurthe to be ycluped kyng,  
Bot|e the hey|e kyng | of hev|ene : that wrog|te al thing|. *R. Glouc. p. 322.*

5 : 5. c : 6.

About|e seint | Ambros|e day|: ido | was al this|,  
Tuelf hundred in yer of grace, and foure and sixti iwis. *R. Glouc. p. 546.*

Lewelin, prince of Walis, robbede mid is route  
The erl|es lond | of Glou|cetre|: in Wal|is about|e. *R. Glouc. p. 551.*

5 : 6. c : 6 l.

So ho|ly lyf | he lad|de and god|: so chast | and so clen|e  
That hey men of the lond wolde hem alday mene  
That hii nadde non eyr bytwene hem. *R. Glouc. p. 330.*

6 : 5. c : 6.

And wel vaire is offringe to the hey weved<sup>2</sup> ber  
And suth|the ofte wan | he thud|er com|: he off|rede ther|. *R. Glouc. p. 545.*

5 : 5 l. c : 6 l.

And ris|en up | with rib|audy|e : tho rob|erdes knav|es.  
*P. Ploughman, B. prol. 44.*

5 l : 5 l. c : 6 l.

To syn|ge ther|e for sym|ony|e : for sil|ver is swet|e.  
*P. Ploughman, id. 86.*

<sup>1</sup> It must be observed that the examples quoted in this chapter have been arranged generally according to the authors, as the number of varieties was too scanty to render the mode of subdivision, hitherto followed, advisable.

<sup>2</sup> *Weved* is the Anglo-Saxon *wigbed*, an altar.

5 : 5. c : 5.

Who with his wisdom won, him strait did chose  
 Their king | and swore | him fe|alty| : to win | or lose|.

F. Q. 2. 10. 37.

Yet secret pleasure did offence impeach,  
 And won|der of | antiq|uity| : long stop'd | his speech|.

F. Q. 2. 10. 68.

5 l : 1. c : 5.

As well | in cur|ious in|struments| : as cun|ning lays|.

F. Q. 2. 10. 59.

They crown'd | the sec|ond Con|stantine| : with joy|ous tears|.

F. Q. 2. 10. 62.

How he | that la|dy's lib|ertie| : might en|terprise|.

F. Q. 4. 12. 28.

Their hearts | were sick, | their eyes | were sore| : their feet | were  
 lame|.

F. Q. 6. 5. 40.

2 : 5 l : 1.

——— Gracious queen,  
 More | than your lord's | depar|ture weep | not : more's | not seen|.

R. II. 2. 2. 24.

Verses ending with section 2. are chiefly found in the  
 works of our dramatists.

1 l : 1. c : 2 l.

Art | thou cer|tain this | is true| : is | it most cer|tain?

Cor. 5. 4. 47.

Verses which end with the compound section are much  
 more common in Anglo-Saxon, than in the later dialects.  
 They yielded to the favourite rhythms of our psalm-  
 metres; and though their popularity revived in some  
 measure during the sixteenth century, they have since  
 fallen into almost total neglect.

Cædmon frequently made both his sections begin ab-  
 ruptly, and for opening the couplet preferred the section  
 2 l.

1 l : 5 l : 1 l c.

——— Hie habbath me to hearran gecorene,  
 Ro|f|e rin|cas : mid swil|cum mæg | man ræd | gethen|cean.

———— They have me for Lord y-chosen,  
Warriors famous ! with such may man council take !

*Cæd. Gen. 285.*

2 l : 2 : 5. c.

———— Gif hit eower ænig mæge  
gewendan mid wihte : that hie word Godes  
lar | e forlæ | ten : son | a hie him | the lath | ran beoth |.

———— If any of you may  
Change this with aught—that they God's word  
And lore desert—soon they to him the more loath'd will be.

*Cæd. id. 427.*

———— Thæm he getruwode wel  
Thæt hie his giongorscipe : fyligen wolden  
Wyr | cæn his wil | lan : for | thon he him | gewit | forgeaf |.

———— In whom he trusted well  
That they his service would follow,  
And work his will—for that he gave them reason—

*Cæd. id. 248.*

2 l : 2 : 5 l. c.

Gif ic ænigum thegne : theoden-madmas  
Gear | a forgeaf | e : then | den we on | tham god | an ric | e  
Gesæl | ige sæt | on : and hæf | don ur | e set | la geweald |.

If I to any thane lordly treasures  
Gave of yore—while we in that good realm  
Sat happy and o'er our seats had sway—

*Cæd. id. 409.*

The last of these verses has the rhythm 6 l : 5 l : 2 c.

It will be observed that in all these examples the alliteration falls on the third accented syllable of the second section. According to Rask, all the preceding syllables form the “complement;” they are to be uttered in a softer and a lower tone, so that the first accent may always fall on the alliterative syllable. Were this theory true, the rhythm of Anglo-Saxon verse would be poor indeed !

Sometimes, though rarely, we find the alliteration falling upon other syllables ; and occasionally we have even two alliterative syllables in the second section.

2 l : 1 l : 1 l. c.

. . . hyge hreoweth : that hie heofonrice  
Ag | an to al | dre : gif | hit eo | wer æ | nig mæg | e  
Gewendan mid wihte.

Rueth my heart, that they heaven's realm  
 Possess for ever! If any of you may  
 This change by aught, &c.

*Cæd. Gen.* 426.

Though not unknown to the old English dialect, these verses are so rarely met with in the interval which elapsed between the Anglo-Saxon period, and the sixteenth century, that we shall pass at once to the rhythms of the Faery Queen.

5 : 5 : 5. c.

You shame | fac'd are | : but shame | fac'dness | itself | is she |.

*F. Q.* 2. 9. 43.

By which she well perceiving what was done,  
 Gan tear her hair, and all her garments rent,  
 And beat | her breast | : and pit | eously | herself | torment |.

*F. Q.* 6. 5. 4.

For no demands he stay'd,  
 But first | him loos'd | : and af | terwards | thus to | him said |.

*F. Q.* 6. 1. 11.

The common *metre* of six accents, which spread so widely during the sixteenth century, seldom tolerated a verse with a compound section. The reluctance to admit these verses was strengthened by the example of Drayton, who rigidly excluded them from the *Polyolbion*. There are, however, a few poems, in which they are admitted freely enough to give a peculiar character to the rhythm. One of these poems is the *Elegy* written by Brysket, (though generally ascribed to Spenser,) on the death of Sir Philip Sidney. It has very little poetical merit, but deserves attention, as having undoubtedly been in Milton's eye, when he wrote his *Lycidas*. From it Milton borrowed his irregular rimes, and that strange mixture of Christianity and Heathenism, which shocked the feelings and roused the indignation of Johnson. It may be questioned, if the peculiarity in the metre can fairly be considered as a blemish. Like endings, recurring at uncertain distances, impart a wildness and an appearance of negligence to the verse, which suits well with the character of elegy. But to bring in St. Peter (as Milton has done) hand in hand with a pagan deity is merely ludicrous; it was the taste of the age, and that is all that can be urged in



its excuse. Still, however, the beauties of this singular poem may well make us tolerant of even greater absurdity. No work of Milton has excited warmer admiration, or called forth more strongly the zeal of the partizan. The elegy on Sir Philip Sidney will afford us a specimen of rather a curious rhythm; and at the same time enable us to judge of Milton's skill in changing the baser metal into gold. It should be observed, that, in *some* editions, the sections are written in separate lines, as if they formed distinct verses.

#### THE MOURNING MUSE OF THESTYLIS.<sup>1</sup>

Come forth, ye Nymphs! come forth, forsake your wat'ry bowers,  
 Forsake your mossy caves, and help me to lament;  
 Help | me to tune | my dole|ful notes|: to gur|gling sound|  
 Of Liffie's tumbling streams, come let salt tears of ours,  
 Mix with his waters fresh: O come, let one consent  
 Joyn | us to mourn | with wail|ful plaints|: the dead|ly wound|  
 Which fatal clap hath made, decreed by higher powers  
 The dreary day, in which they have from us yrent  
 The noblest plant that might from east to west be found,  
 Mourn, mourn great Philip's fall! mourn we his woeful end,  
 Whom spiteful death hath pluckt untimely from the tree,  
 Whiles yet his years in flowre did promise worthy fruit, &c.

Up | from his tomb|: the migh|ty Cor|ine|us rose|,  
 Who cursing oft the Fates that his mishap had bred,  
 His hoary locks he tare, calling the Heavens unkind;  
 The Thames was heard to roar, the Seyne and eke the Mose,  
 The Scheld, the Danow's self this great mischance did rue,  
 With torment and with grief their fountains pure and clear  
 Were troub|led, and | with swel|ling floods|: declar'd | their woes|.  
 The Muses comfortless, the Nymphs with pallid hue.  
 The Sylvan Gods likewise came running far and near;  
 And, all with tears bedew'd and eyes cast up on high,  
 O help, O help, ye Gods! they ghastly gan to cry.  
 O change the cruel fate of this so rare a wight,  
 And grant that nature's course may measure out his age.  
 The beasts their food forsook and, trembling fearfully,  
 Each sought his cave or den, this cry did them so fright.  
 Out from amid the waves by storm then stirr'd to rage,  
 This cry did cause to rise th' old father Ocean hoar;  
 Who grave with eld and full of majesty in sight

<sup>1</sup> [In the Globe edition of Spenser, p. 563.]

Spake | in this wise |: Refrain, | quoth he, | your tears | and plaints |,  
 Cease these your idle words, make vain requests no more ;  
 No humble speech nor moan may move the fixed stint  
 Of Destiny or Death ; such is his will that paints  
 The earth with colours fresh, the darkest skies with store  
 Of star|ry light |: and though | your tears | a heart | of flint |  
 Might tender make, yet nought herein they will prevail  
 Whiles thus | he said |: the no|ble Knight | who gan | to feel |  
 His vital force to faint, and death with cruel dint  
 Of dire|ful dart |: his mor|tal bod|y to | assail |,  
 With eyes lift up to Heav'n, and courage frank as steel,  
 With cheer|ful face |: where val|our live|ly was | exprest |,  
 But humble mind, he said, O Lord, if ought this frail  
 And earthly carcass have thy service sought t'advance,  
 If my desire hath been, still to relieve th' opprest ;  
 If, justice to maintain, that valour I have spent  
 Which thou me gav'st ; or if henceforth I might advance  
 Thy name, | thy truth, | then spare | me, Lord |: if thou | think best |  
 Forbear these unripe years. But if thy will be bent,  
 If that | prefix|ed time | be come |: which thou | hast set |,  
 Through pure and fervent faith I hope now to be placed  
 In th' everlasting bliss, which with thy precious blood  
 Thou purchase didst for us. With that a sigh he fet,  
 And straight a cloudy mist his senses over-cast ;  
 His lips waxt pale and wan, like damask roses bud  
 Cast from the stalk, or like in field to purple flowre,  
 Which languisheth being shred by culter as it past.  
 A trembling chilly cold ran through their veins, which were  
 With eyes brimfull of tears, to see his fatal hour, &c.

## VERSES OF SEVEN ACCENTS

May be divided, like those of six, into two classes, accordingly as they begin or end with the compound section. Both these classes were known to the Anglo-Saxons ; but under the influence of the psalm metres the latter gradually gave way, in the same manner as the corresponding rhythm in the metre of six accents. It was, however, very freely used by certain of our poets, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries ; more especially by Phaer and Chapman.

We will first take the verses that *begin* with the compound section. Cædmon generally opened the first section with an accent, and the second with an unaccented syllable.

1 l : 1 l. c : 2 ll.

And moste ane tid : ute weorthan  
Wes|an an|e win|ter stun|de : thon|ne ic mid | this wer|ode.

And might I one season outfare  
And bide one winter's space! then I with this host—

*Cæd. Gen. 369.*

1 : 6 l. c : 8.

hæl|eth-helm | on heaf|od aset|te : and thon|e full heard|e geband|.   
Hero's-helm on head he set, and it full hard y-bound.

*Cæd. id. 444.*

2 : 5. c : 5.

War|iath inc | with thon|e wæstm|: ne wyrth | inc wil|na gæd|.

Be ye both ware of that fruit, ne let it goad your lust.

*Cæd. id. 236.*

2 l : 2 l. c : 5 l.

Lag|on tha oth|re fynd | on tham fy|re : the ær | swa feal|a hæf|don  
Gewinnes with heora waldend.

Lay the others, fiends, in fire, that erewhile had so fele  
Strife with their Ruler.

*Cæd. Gen. 322.*

2 l : 5 l. c : 5 l.

——— Næron metode

Tha | gytā wid|lond ne weg|as nyt|te : ac stod | bewrig|en fæs|te  
Folde mid flode.<sup>1</sup>

——— Nor had the Maker

As yet wide land, nor pathways useful; but fast beset  
With flood earth stood.

*Cæd. id. 155.*

5 l : 1 l. c : 5 l.

Tha spræc | se of|ermod|a cyn|ing : the ær | wæs eng|la scyn|ost.

Then spake the haughty king, that erewhile was of angels sheenest.

*Cæd. id. 338.*

5 : 5 l. c : 4 l.

Se feond | mid his | gefer|um eal|lum : feal|lon tha u|fon of heof|num.

The fiend with all his feres fell then on high from heaven.

*Cæd. id. 306.*

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<sup>1</sup> [In Grein, l. 156 begins with *Wid lond.*—W. W. S.]

The last verse but one approaches very nearly to the favourite rhythm of Chapman; of which we have no less than five examples in the first six lines of his *Iliad*.

5 l : 1. c : 5.

Achil|les bane|ful wrath | resound |: O God|dess! that | imposed |  
 Infinite sorrows on the Greeks : and many brave souls los'd  
 From breasts | hero|ique, sent | them farre |: to that | invis|ible cave |  
 That no | light com|forts, and | their lims |: to dogs | and vul|tures  
 gave|. To all | which Jove's | will gave | effect |: from whom | strife first |  
 begunne| Betwixt | Atrid|es, king of men |: and The|tis' god|like sonne|. *Iliad*, 1. 1.

The same verse is also common in the translations of Phaer and Golding. Like Chapman also, these poets frequently begin the first section abruptly, and sometimes even the second; but they never allow themselves the liberty, which the latter so often takes, of opening a verse with the section 5 : 2. c.

5 : 2. c : 5.

This grace desir'd  
 Vouchsafe | to me|! paines | for my teares |: let these | rude Greekes |  
 repay| Forc'd with thy arrowes. Thus he pray'd, and Phœbus heard him  
 pray. And vext | at heart | down | from the tops |: of steepe | heaven  
 stoopt|; his bow And quiver cover'd round, his hands did on his shoulders throw ;  
 And of the angrie deitye, the arrowes as he mov'd  
 Rat'l'd about him——. *Chapman. Iliad*, 1. 40.

5 : 2. c : 2.

Jove's and Latona's sonne, who, fired against the king of men  
 For contumelie shown his priest, infectious sicknesses sent  
 To plague the armie; and to death by troopes the soldiers went,  
 Occa|sioned thus|; Chry|ses the priest |: came | to the fleete | to buy |  
 For presents of unvalu'd price, his daughter's libertie, &c.

*Chapman. Iliad*, 1. 8.

5 : 2 l. c : 1.

Thus Xan|thus spake|; a|blest Achil|les : now | at least | our care |  
 Shall bring thee off; but not farre hence the fatal minutes are  
 Of thy grave ruine. *Chapman. Iliad*, 18.

This kind of verse is sometimes used in Layamon, but more rarely than might have been expected. Robert of Gloucester has made it the great staple of his Chronicle. He uses a very loose rhythm, one of his sections approaching to the triple measure, while the other not unfrequently belongs to the strictest law of the common measure.

2 : 5. c : 8.

Eng|elond ys | a wel | god lond| : ich wen|e of ech|e lond best|  
Yset in the ende of the world. *Rob. Glouc. p. 1.*

6 : 6. c : 5 l.

The Sax|ones and | the Eng|lische tho| : heo had|den al|an hon|de,  
Five and thritty schiren heo maden in Engelerde.

*Rob. Glouc. p. 3.*

He seems to have preferred opening his verse abruptly, and, like Cædmon, generally began the second section with an unaccented syllable.

Ev|erwyk | of fair|est wod|e : Lyn|colne of fayr|est men|,  
Gran|tebrug|ge and Hon|tyndon|e : mest plen|te of | dup fen|,  
Ely of fairest place, of fairest sigte Rochestre,  
Ev|ene a|gelyn Fraun|ce ston|de : the con|tre of | Chiches|tre.  
*Rob. Glouc. p. 6.*

We have now to consider those verses which *end* with the compound section ; and will begin with some examples furnished by Cædmon.

1 l : 2 : 5 l. c.

forthon he sceolde grund gesecan  
Heard|es hel|le-wit|es : thæs | the he wann | with heof|nes wal|dend.

therefore must he seek th' abyss  
Of dread hell-torment, since he warr'd with heaven's wielder.

*Cæd. Gen. 302.*

2 l : 5 : 5 l. c.

God sylfa wearth  
Miht|ig on mod|e yr|re : wearp hin|e on | that mor|ther-in|nan.

God's mighty self became  
At heart enraged ; he hurl'd him to that murderer's den.

*Cæd. Gen. 341.*

2 l : 5 l : 1 l. c.

thær he hæfth mon geworhtne  
 Æf|ter his on|licnis|se : mid tham | he wil|e eft | geset|tan  
 Heofona rice mid hlutrum sawlum.

there he hath man ywrought  
 After his likeness ; with whom he wills again to people  
 Heaven's realm with shining souls. *Cæd. Gen. 395.*

3 l : 5 : 5 l. c.

hehs|ta heof|ones wal|dend : wearp hin|e of | than he|an sto|le.  
 The highest Heaven-wielder hurl'd him from the lofty seat.  
*Cæd. id. 300.*

This kind of verse is to be found in *Layamon*.

7 l : 1 : 9 l. c.

To Bath|e com | the Kæise|re : and | bilsei | thene cas|tel ther|e.  
 To Bath came the Kaiser, and beset the castle there.  
*Layamon, 21031.*

2 : 6 : 6. c.

Fer|de geond al | Scotland| : and set|te hit an | his ag|ere hand|.  
 He went through all Scotland, and brought it under his own hand.  
*Layamon, 21045.*

Phaer and Chapman also used similar rhythms ; the latter more sparingly than the former.

5 : 5 : 5. c.

Then for disdaine, for on themselves their own~~e~~ worke Jove did  
 fling,  
 Their sis|ter craw|lyd furth| : both swift | of feete | and wight | of  
 wing|,  
 A mon|ster ghastr|y great| : for ev|ery plume | her car|cas beares|,  
 Like number leering eyes she hath, like number harrckning eares.  
*Phaer.*

Great Atreus' sonnes ! said he,

And all | ye well|-griev'd Greekes| : the Gods | whose hab|ita|tions  
 be|,  
 In heavenly houses, grace your powers with Priam's razed town,  
 And grant ye happy conduct home. *Chapman. Iliad, 1. 15.*

Seed of the Harpye ! in the charge ye undertake of us,  
 Discharge | it not | as when| : Patroc|lus ye | left dead | in field|.  
*Chapman. Iliad, 19 ; l. 23 from end.*

Wher virtue wants and vice abounds, there wealth is but a baited hooke  
To make men swallow down their bane, before on danger deepe they  
looke.

Even at that period this metre was "not very much used at length." The couplet was more commonly divided into the stave of *eight and eight*; in which shape it is still flourishing in our poetry.

In his longer rhythms Cædmon not unfrequently inserts a couplet of eight accents; of which five were sometimes given to the one section, and three to the other; as,

8 l : 1 l : 7 l. c.

Bigstand|ath me strang|e geneat|as : tha | ne wil|lath me æt | tham  
strith|e geswic|an,  
Hælethas heardmode.

By me stand liegemen strong, they that will not at the strife fail me,  
Heroes stalwart. *Cædmon. Gen. 284.*

But in the great majority of cases the accents are equally divided, each section taking four. It is highly probable that this was owing to the ecclesiastical chaunts; and that the Latin metre of four accents, which, if not invented, was chiefly cultivated by the celebrated Ambrose Bishop of Milan, had already begun to exercise an influence over our English rhythms.

1 : 5 l. c : 1 l : 1 l. c.

Worh|te man | him hit | to wit|e : hyr|a wor|uld wæs | gehwyrf|ed.  
They wrought them this for punishment; their world was changed!  
*Cæd. Gen. 318.*

1 l : 1 l. c : 5 : 5 l. c.

Deor|e wæs | he driht|ne ur|um : ne mih|te him | bedyrn|ed  
wyrth|an,  
That his engyl ongan ofermod wesan.

Dear was he to our Lord, nor might from him be hidden,  
That his angel gan to wax o'erproud. *Cæd. id. 261.*

1 l : 1 l. c : 2 : 5 l. c.

Gif | hie brec|ath his | gebod|scipe : thon|ne he him | abol|gen  
wurth|eth.

If they break his commandment, then he 'gainst them enrag'd becomes.  
*Cæd. id. 430.*

2 : 6 l : 2 l : 6 l.

He let hine swa micles wealdan,  
Heht<sup>1</sup>ne to him | on heof<sup>2</sup>ona ric<sup>3</sup>e : hæf<sup>4</sup>de he hin<sup>5</sup>e swa hwit<sup>6</sup>ne  
geworht<sup>7</sup>ne.

He let him so mickle weild,  
Next to himself in heaven's realm; he had him so purely wrought.—  
*Cæd. id. 253.*

2 l : 1 l. c : 1 l : 1 c.

Hwy sceal ic æfter his hyldo theowian,  
Bug<sup>1</sup>an him swil<sup>2</sup>ces geong<sup>3</sup>ordom<sup>4</sup>es : ic | mæg wes<sup>5</sup>an God | swa  
he<sup>6</sup> |.

Why must I for his favour serve—  
Bow to him with such obedience? I may be God as he.  
*Cæd. id. 282.*

2 l : 1 l. c : 1 l : 1 l. c.

Frynd synd hie mine georne,  
Hol<sup>1</sup>de on hyr<sup>2</sup>a hyg<sup>3</sup>e-sceaf<sup>4</sup>tum : ic | mæg hyr<sup>5</sup>a hear<sup>6</sup>ra wes<sup>7</sup>an.

Friends are they of mine right truly,  
Faithful in their hearts deep councils; I may their liege lord be.  
*Cæd. id. 287.*

5 : 5 l. c : 5 l : 1 c.

Ac niot<sup>1</sup>ath inc | thæs oth<sup>2</sup>res eal<sup>3</sup>les : forlæt<sup>4</sup>ath thon<sup>5</sup>e æn<sup>6</sup>ne beam.  
But enjoy ye all the other—leave ye that one tree. *Cæd. id. 235.*

5 : 5 ll. c : 1 : 6 l. c.

Swa wyn<sup>1</sup>lic wæs | his wæstm | on heof<sup>2</sup>onum : that | him com | from  
wer<sup>3</sup>oda driht<sup>4</sup>ne.

So [excellent was his appearance] in heaven; [that] came to him from  
the Lord of Hosts. *Cæd. id. 255.*

6 : 5 l. c : 1 l : 5 l. c.

Ænne hæfde he swa swithne geworhtne,  
Swa miht<sup>1</sup>igne on | his mod<sup>2</sup>gethoh<sup>3</sup>te : he | let hin<sup>4</sup>e swa mic<sup>5</sup>les  
weal<sup>6</sup>dan.

One had he so mighty wrought,  
So powerful in his mind's thought—he let him so mickle wield.  
*Cæd. id. 252.*

These verses are also to be found in the psalm metres of  
the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Robert of Glou-  
cester used them very freely in his Chronicle.



King Wyllam was to milde men debonere y-nou,  
 Ac to men that hym with-sede to al sturnhede he drou,  
 In chirch|e he was | devout y-nou| : vor hym | ne ssol|de non day|  
 abyd|e,  
 That he | ne hur|de mas|se and mat|yuns : and ev|esong | and ech e  
 tyd|e. *R. Glouc. p. 369.*

## VERSES OF NINE ACCENTS.

Cædmon occasionally uses couplets, which contain nine, or even *more* than nine accents.

1 l : 2 l. c : 1 : 5. c.

And | heo al|le for|sceop drih|ten to deof|lum : for|thon heo his  
 dæd | and word|<sup>1</sup>  
 Noldon weorthian.

And them all the Lord transhaped to fiends, for that they his deed and  
 word  
 Would not worship. *Cæd. id. 309.*

3 : 6 l. c : 1 l : 1 ll. c.

Het|e hæf|de he æt | his hear|rang gewun|nen : hyl|do hæf|de his | fer-  
 lor|ene.

Hate had he from his Lord y-won ; his favour had forlorn.

*Cæd. id. 301.*

In the following couplet we have as many as *eleven* accents.

And sceolde his drihtne thancian  
 Thæs lean|es the | he him on | tham leoh|te gescer|ede : thon|ne let  
 he | his hin|e lang|e weal|dan.

And should his Lord have thank'd  
 For the portion he him in light had given, then had he let him long time  
 wield it. *Cæd. id. 257.*

Perhaps, however, we ought to read, thon|ne let|e he his  
 hin|e ; and, by this elision of the vowel, reduce the number  
 of accents to *ten*.

These long rhythms may be traced through our literature,  
 till they ended in the doggrel verses, which Shakespeare  
 put into the mouth of his Clowns, and Swift used as a fit  
 vehicle for his coarse but witty buffoonery. Their revival  
 is hardly to be wished for.

<sup>1</sup> [In Grein's edition, the line begins with *drihten*.—W. W. S.]

## CHAPTER VIII.

## THE SECTIONAL PAUSE

gives a character so very marked and peculiar to those rhythms into which it enters, as makes the consideration of them apart from the others, not only a matter of convenience, but almost of necessity. We have, therefore, reserved the present chapter for tracing the history, and noticing the peculiarities, of those sections which admit the pause.

As to the origin of this pause, I have already ventured an opinion. I think it owes its existence, in our poetry, to the *emphatic stop*; but as the question is one of difficulty, and as I may have occasion hereafter to refer to some of the reasons, which lead me to this conclusion, I make no apology for laying those reasons at some length before the reader.

In the earlier and primitive languages, we find the intonation of words a matter of very high importance. In the Greek and Latin, there are many words which have nothing else to distinguish them, but the tone; thus the Latin *ne*, when it signified *not*, was pronounced with a sharp tone—when it signified *lest*, with a grave one; or to speak with greater precision, it was pronounced, in the first case, more sharply than the ordinary pitch of the voice, and more gravely in the latter. In the Chinese, there are monosyllables, with no less than five distinct meanings, according to the tone which is given them; and those, who have heard them pronounced by a native, will readily understand the immense resources, which may thus be placed within the reach of language. I am not, however, aware that these differences of tone have ever been applied to the purposes of *construction*. There does not seem to have been any re-

lative and subordinate intonation in a sentence ; a word had its tone fixed, and this it retained, whatever its position.

Whether the metrical *arsis* heightened the tone of the syllable on which it fell, has been doubted. Bentley thought it did ; but later critics have seen reason to question his opinion ; and as it must often interfere with the *verbal* tone, their objections are entitled to much weight. There are, however, passages in the old grammarians, which favour the notion of there having been *some* change in the voice. May not the *arsis* have been marked by a stress, resembling our modern accent ? If this were so, the change from the temporal to the accentual rhythm, in the fourth century, would be natural and easy ; the same syllable taking the accent in the new rhythm, which (according to Bentley and Dawes) received the *arsis* in the old.

With this exception (if it be one), I know no instance in the Greek and Latin, where an alteration either in the tone or loudness of the voice, has been used for purposes of construction or of rhythm. The tone seems to have been a mere accident of the *word* ; and had no influence on the sentence, further than as it contributed to its harmony. The stress of the voice seems to have been employed solely for the purposes of emphasis ; and was certainly considered by Quintilian as reducible to no system, for he leaves the learner to gather from experience, "*quando attollenda vel submittenda sit vox.*" Had the stress of voice been in any way dependent on the *construction*, its laws might have been readily explained ; and would have certainly fixed the attention of a people who scrutinized the peculiarities of their language with so much care.

But though I can find no system of accents like our own, in these kindred languages, yet there are reasons for believing, that our present accentuation has been handed down to us from a very remote antiquity. We find it reduced to a system in our Anglo-Saxon rhythms ; and its wide prevalence in the other Gothic dialects, points clearly to an origin of even earlier date. The precision of the laws, which regulated the accents in Anglo-Saxon verse, is one of the most striking features of their poetry. We find none of these

licentious departures from rule,<sup>1</sup> which are so common in the old English, and are occasionally met with, even in our later dialect. It may be questioned, if any *primary* accent were doubtful<sup>2</sup> in the Anglo-Saxon; at any rate, the limits of uncertainty must have been extremely narrow.

In modern usage, we sometimes hear a word accented, though it immediately adjoin upon an accented syllable; especially when it contains a long vowel-sound. The rhythm of Sackville's line,<sup>3</sup>

Their greäte | cru|eltee : and the deepe bloodshed  
Of friends ———

is not without example, in the every-day conversation of many persons, who have accustomed themselves to a slow and emphatic mode of delivery. Were this practice generally sanctioned by that of our earlier and more perfect dialect, we might infer, with some plausibility, that our English accents were at one time, like those of the Greek and Latin, strictly verbal; and that the sectional pause was a consequence, which followed naturally from the system of accentuation, originally prevalent in our language. But there are grounds for believing, that in the Anglo-Saxon the stress on the adjective was *always* subordinate to that on the substantive. In nine cases out of ten, it was clearly subordinate; in no case is it found predominant;<sup>4</sup> and when with the aid of the sectional pause, it takes the accent, there is, in the great majority of cases, an evident intention on the part of the poet, to use the pause for the purposes of emphasis—the substantive, in all probability, still keeping the stronger accent. There are, indeed, instances of the sectional pause, where it is certainly *not* used as an emphatic

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<sup>1</sup> The widest departure from the common rhythm of the language which the Anglo-Saxon poet allowed himself, was owing to the frequent use of the sectional pause. We shall have more to say on this head shortly.

<sup>2</sup> There are perhaps instances, in which the same sentence has been differently accentuated. But this may be owing to a difference of dialect. The Anglo-Saxon author is, I believe, always consistent with *himself*.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 295.

<sup>4</sup> When the adjective has a stronger accent than its substantive, it always forms part of a *compound*, and is no longer subject to inflexion.

stop ; but these, I believe, are, for the most part, found in poems of inferior merit, or in those artificial rhythms<sup>1</sup> which were probably invented in the course of the ninth and tenth centuries. They may perhaps be laid to the account of carelessness or of incapacity, and ranked with those cases, where the ordinary rhythm of the language has been made to yield to the rhythm of its poetry. These exceptions may shake, but I do not think they are sufficiently numerous to overturn, the hypothesis that has been started.

Having thus given the reasons, which incline me to the opinion already stated as to the origin of the pause, I shall now proceed to range in order, those sections into which it enters. If we consider the pause as filling the place of an unaccented syllable, we may use nearly the same notation to indicate the rhythm, as hitherto. We have merely to show the presence of the pause, by the addition of a *p*. Thus the section we have already quoted from Sackville,

Their greate | cru | eltee.

would be represented by the formula, 5 *ll.* *p*.

#### THE SECTION 1 *p*. OF TWO ACCENTS.

Sections, which admit the pause, may be divided into two classes, accordingly as they contain two or three accents. When the section contains only two, the pause cannot change its position, for it *must* fall between the accented syllables ; but as the section may vary both its beginning and its end no less than three different ways, it admits of nine varieties. Of these six have established themselves in English literature, to wit, 1. *p*. 1 *l.* *p*. 1 *ll.* *p*. 5. *p*. 5 *l.* *p*. 5 *ll.* *p*.

Whether the section 1. *p*. were known in Anglo-Saxon, is a matter of some doubt. In Beowulf [l. 1168], there is the couplet,

Spræc | tha | : ides Scyldinga.<sup>2</sup>

Spake then the Scylding's Lady ———

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<sup>1</sup> Conybeare's riming poem, for example.

<sup>2</sup> [Grein makes the line much longer. —W. W. S.]

and in Cædmon, p. 185 [*Exod.* 118], we have,

Thy læs him westengryre,  
Har | hæth | : holmegum wederum.

Lest them the desert-horror—  
The hoar heath—with deluging storms, &c.

The lengthened section, 1 *l. p.* is somewhat more common ;

Tha on dunum gesæt—  
Earc | No | es : the Armenia  
Hatene syndon.

Then on the downs rested  
Noah's arc—which Armenia  
Are hight. *Cæd. Gen.* 1421.

See also,

Fær | No | es. *Cæd. id.* 1323.

The section 1 *p.* was *never* common. It was chiefly used by our dramatists ; and more particularly in their *faëry* dialect.

On the ground  
Sleep | sound | !  
I'll apply  
To your eye,  
Gentle lover, remedy.  
When thou wak'st,  
Thou | tak'st |  
True delight  
In the sight  
Of thy former lady's eye. *M. N. D.* 3. 2. 448.

Up and down, every where,  
I strew these herbs to purge the air,  
Let your odour : drive | hence |  
All | mists | : that dazzle sense. *Fl. Fa. Sh.* 3. 1.

Mark what radiant state she spreads  
In circle round her shining throne,  
Shooting her beams, like silver threads ;  
This | this | : is she alone,  
Sitting like a goddess bright,  
In the centre of her light. *Arcades*, 14.

This is the only instance of the section in Milton, who doubtless borrowed it from Fletcher. The propriety of Shakespeare's rhythm will be better understood, if we sup-

pose (what was certainly intended) that the fairy is pouring the love-juice on the sleeper's eye, while he pronounces the words, "Thou tak'st." The words form, indeed, the fairy's "charm," and the rhythm is grave and emphatic as their import. I cannot think, with Tyrwhitt, that the line would be improved, "both in its measure and construction, if it were written thus:

See | thou tak'st|. "

I know not how the construction is bettered, and the correspondence, no less than the fitness of the numbers, is entirely lost. Seward, in like manner, took compassion upon the halting verses of Fletcher. His corrections afford us an amusing specimen of conjectural criticism.

Let your odour : drive | *from* hence |  
All | *mistes* |: that dazzle sense !

Fletcher, like Shakespeare, had a *charm* to deal with ; and, to gain the same object, he used the same rhythm.

The sections 1. *p.* and 1 *l. p.* are both of them to be found in Spenser's *August* ; but the strange rhythm which he adopted in his *roundle* can only be considered as an experiment. It would be idle to trace out every variety he has stumbled upon, in writing a metre for which he had no precedent, and in which he has had no imitator.

The section 1 *ll. p.* is peculiar to the Anglo-Saxon. In that dialect it is met with, not only among the short and rapid rhythms of Beowulf, but also in the stately numbers of Cædmon ; and of all the pausing sections known to our earliest dialect, was the one most widely used. It is singular it should so completely have disappeared from the early English. I do not recollect one single instance of it in that dialect.

We will begin with the couplet of four accents.

Tha | theah | tode : theoden ure. *Cæd. Gen. 92.*

Deop | dream | a leas : drihten ure. *Cæd. id. 40.*

Beorn | bland | en-feax : bill-geslihtes.  
*Battle of Brunanburh, 45.*

mod | mæg | pade : mine fægnade. *Rim. Poem, 33.*

Har   Hil   derinc : hreman ne thorfte.	<i>Brunanburh</i> , 39.
Swearth   syn   nihte : side and wide.	<i>Cæd. id.</i> 118.
Swearth   swith   rian : geond sidne grund.	<i>Cæd. id.</i> 134.
Treow   tel   gade : tir   wel   gade.	<i>Rim. Poem</i> , 34.
Gold   gear   wade : gim   hwear   fade.	<i>Same</i> , 36.
Sinc   sear   wade : sib   near   wade.	<i>Same</i> , 37.
Fæge feollon : feld   dyn   ede.	<i>Brunanburh</i> , 12.
Sar and sorge : susl   throw   edon.	<i>Cæd. id.</i> 75.
Ellen eacnade : ead   beac   nade.	<i>Rim. Poem</i> , 31.
haten for herigum : heo   ric   sode.	<i>Alf. Met.</i> 26. 57.

The following are instances of this section, when found in the couplet of five accents.

Hof   her   gode : hygeteonan wræc.	<i>Cæd. Gen.</i> 1380.
Word   weorth   ian : hæfdon wite micel.	<i>Cæd. id.</i> 329.
Ofer holmes hrincg : hof   sel   este.	<i>Cæd. id.</i> 1393.
Tha com ofer foldan : fus   sith   ian.	<i>Cæd. id.</i> 154.
Wlitebeorhte gesceaft : wel   lic   ode.	<i>Cæd. id.</i> 131.
ealra feonda gehwile : fyr   ed   neowe.	<i>Cæd. id.</i> 314.

The section 5. *p.* was used by our dramatists in their faëry dialect. It was also found in Sackville, and must, at one time, have taken deep root in the language, for it forms a striking feature in the staves of several popular songs.

O Troy | ! Troy | ! : there is no boote but bale,  
The hugie horse within thy walles is brought,  
Thy turrets fall.

*Sackville. M. for M. Induction, st. 65.*

Let her fly, let her scape,  
Give again : her own | shape |.

*Fl. Fa. Sh.* 3. 1.

I do wander every where,  
Swifter than : the moon's | sphere |.

*M. N. Dream*, 2. 1. 6.



Warton, in quoting Sackville, added a third *Troy*, without authority from the poet, or notice to the reader.

O Troy! Trøy! Troy! there is no bote but bale.

The passages he has thus corrupted are more numerous, and the corruptions more serious than his late able editor suspected. They would have fully satisfied even the spleen of a Ritson, had it been his good fortune to have lighted on them. Steevens also, with that mischievous ingenuity which called down the happy ridicule of Gifford, thought fit to *improve* the metre of Shakespeare. He reads the line thus :

Swifter than the moon | *es* sphere |.

But the quarto of 1600, and the folio of 1623, are both against him. The flow of Shakespeare's line is quite in keeping with the peculiar rhythm which he has devoted to his fairies. It wants nothing from the critic but his forbearance.

Burns, in his "Lucy," has used this section often enough to give a peculiar character to his metre.<sup>1</sup>

O, wat ye wha's : in yon | town |,  
Ye see the e'enin sun upon ?  
The fairest dame's : in yon | town |,  
That e'enin sun is shining on.—

The sun blinks blithe : on yon | town |,  
And on yon bonie braes of Ayr ;  
But my delight : in yon | town |,  
And dearest bliss is Lucy fair, &c.

Moore also, in one of his beautiful melodies, has used a compound stanza, which opens with a stave like Burns'. His stanza contains also *other* specimens of this section.

While gazing : on the moon's | light |,  
A moment from her smile I turn'd,  
To look at orbs : that, more | bright |,  
In lone and distant glory burn'd ;

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<sup>1</sup> [This song, beginning "O, wat ye," &c., was written to a particular tune, called "The bonie Lass in yon town." Hence the peculiar phrase "in yon town" is not the poet's own.—W. W. S.]

But too | far |  
 Each proud | star |  
 For me to feel its warming flame,  
 Much more | dear |  
 That mild | sphere |  
 Which near our planet smiling came ;  
 Thus Mary dear ! be thou my own,  
 While brighter eyes unheeded play,  
 I'll love those moonlight looks alone  
 That bless my home, and guide my way.

The day had sunk : in dim | showers |,  
 But midnight now, with lustre meek,  
 Illumined all : the pale | flowers |,  
 Like hope upon a mourner's cheek.  
 I said |, (while |  
 The moon's | smile |  
 Play'd o'er a stream, in dimpling bliss),  
 " The moon | looks |  
 On many brooks ;  
 " The brook can see no moon but this :"  
 And thus, I thought, our fortunes run,  
 For many a lover looks to thee ;  
 While, oh ! I feel there is but *one*,  
*One* Mary in the world for me !

Sir Jonah Barrington tells us, in his *Memoirs*, that this singular stanza belonged to a well-known Irish song, which was popular some fifty years since.

The section 5 *l. p.* was used from the earliest period to which we can trace our literature, down to the close of the sixteenth century. It is found in the almost perfect rhythms of Cædmon, and in the majestic stanza which we owe to the genius of a Spenser. Sackville used it with a profusion, which has given a very marked character to his metre ; and there are grounds for suspecting that it was not altogether unknown to Milton. My search, however, in the works of this poet has hitherto been without success.

Verses of four accents.

On last | leg | dun : lathum theodum. *Brunanburh*, 22.

The King | ef | tir : that he wes gane,  
 To Louch-lomond the way has tane. *Bruce*, 3. 405.

Stowe gestefnde : tha stod | rath | e. *Cæd. Gen.* 160.

Thæt hi that rice : geræht | hæf | don. *Alf. Met.* 26. 18.

He is dead : and gone |, La | dy,

He is dead and gone ;

At his head a green grass turf,

At his heels a stone.

*Hamlet*, 4. 5. 29.

A year or two ago there was published a book of songs, written on the model of the exquisite little pieces, which are scattered through the works of our dramatists. Many of these songs are extremely beautiful ; but the author seems to have caught more happily the *spirit*<sup>1</sup> than the *form* of his originals ; to have followed the flow of thought and feeling much better than the rhythm. He must have been thinking of Shakespeare's metre when he wrote.

Lady sing no more,

Science is in vain,

Till | the heart | be touch'd |, Lady,

And give forth its pain.

But in the one stave, *Lady* forms an essential part of the rhythm, while it may be rejected from the other without doing it the slightest injury. It is, in fact, a mere *pendant* ; and might as well have been written *between* the verses, as at the end of one of them.

The section 5 *l. p.* is also common in verses of five accents.

His freond | frith | o : and gefean ealle.

*Cæd. Gen.* 57.

Our prince | Da | wy : the erle of Huntintown

Thre dochtrys had.

*Wallace*, 1. 45.

Compleyne | Lord | ys : compleyne yhe Ladyis brycht,

Compleyne for him, that worthi was and wycht.

*Wallace*, 2. 225.

The deepe | daun | ger : that he so sore did feare.

*Sackville. M. for M. Buckingham*, 45.

Whom great Macedo vanquisht there in sight,

With deepe | slaugh | ter : despoiling all his pride.

*Sackville. M. for M. Induction*, 59.

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<sup>1</sup> Certainly a much more important matter !

When Hannibal,  
 And worthy Scipio last in armes were sene,  
 Before Carthago gate, to try for all  
 The worlds | em|pire : to whom it should befall.  
*Sackville. M. for M. Induction, 60.*

Her eyes | swol|len : with flowing stremes affote.  
*Sackville. Induction, 13.*

The hugie hostes, Darius and his power,  
 His kings|, princ|es : his peeres and all his flower.  
*Sackville. Induction, 58.*

What could binde  
 The vaine | peo|ple : but they will swerve and sway.  
*Sack. Buckingham, 61.*

Yet ween'd by secret signs of manliness,  
 Which close appear'd in that rude brutishness,  
 That he | whi|lom : some gentle swain had been.  
*F. Q. 4. 7. 45.*

His land | mort|gag'd : he sea-beat in the way  
 Wishes for home a thousand sithes a day.  
*Hall. Sat. 4. 6. 78.*

Which parted thence,  
 As pearls from diamonds dropt : in brief|, sor|row<sup>1</sup>  
 Would be a rarity most belov'd, if all  
 Could so become it. *Lear, 4. 3. 23.*

With all my heart, good Thomas : I have|, Thom|as,  
 A secret to impart unto you.  
*B. Jonson. Ev. M. in his H. 3. 2.*

Make your own purpose  
 How in my strength you please : for you|, Ed|mund,  
 Whose virtue and obedience doth this instant  
 So much commend itself, you shall be ours. *Lear, 2. 1. 113.*

Our dramatists very commonly placed a pause before the last accent, when they ended the verse with the name or title of the person addressed. There are three or four examples of this practice among the verses last quoted, and we shall meet with others as we proceed further.

#### THE SECTION 5 *ll. p.*

is found in the old English metre of four accents, and in

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<sup>1</sup> [Differently divided in the Globe edition.]

the works of our dramatists. It was also used by other writers of the sixteenth century, more especially by Sackville. In the Anglo-Saxon it is of very rare occurrence, but is occasionally met with ;

Him tha secg hrathe : gewat | sith | ian.

Then a soldier quickly gan speed him.

*Cæd. Gen.* 2018.

Whan corn ripeth in every steode,

Mury hit is in feld and hyde ;

Synne hit is and schame to chide ;

Knightis wollith on huntyng ride ;

The deor | gal | opith : by wodis side, &c.

*Alisaunder, ed. Weber,* l. 457.

Yet saw I Scilla and Marius where they stood

Their greate | cru | eltee : and the deepe bloodshed

Of frenda.

*Sackville. M. for M. Induction,* 61.

O Jove! to thee above the rest I make

My humble playnt, guide me, that what I speake

May be thy will upon this wretch to fall,

On thee |! Ban | istaire : wretch of wretches all.

*Sackville. Buckingham,* 92.

Remove | mys | terie : from religion,

From godly fear all superstition.

*Puttenham. Parth.*

Have you yourselves, Somerset, Buckingham,

Brave York |, Salis | bury : and victorious Warwick,

Receiv'd deep scars, &c.

*2 H. VI. 1. 1. 85.*

O! who hath done

This deed |?—No | body : I myself, farewell!

*Othello, 5. 2. 122*

But room |, fa | ëry : here comes Oberon.

And here my mistress, would that he was gone!

*M. N. D. 2. 1. 58.*

The verses 5 *l. p* : 5. and 5 *ll. p* : 1. contain, each of them, *ten* syllables. This was doubtless the reason of the forbearance shown to them by our classical writers of the sixteenth century.

#### THE SECTION OF THREE ACCENTS.

In the section of three accents the pause may fall between the first and second accented syllables, between the

second and third, or in *both* these places. We might provide for these three possible contingencies by dividing the pausing sections (like the riming sections,<sup>1</sup>) into three classes. But, in fact, the two first classes are alone met with in our literature, none of our sections containing two pauses.<sup>2</sup>

THE SECTION 1. *p.*

of the first class, is occasionally found in Anglo-Saxon poems ;

Hremmas wundon  
Earn | .æs | es georn | : wæs on eorþan cyrm.

The ravens wheel'd around—  
The ern, greedy for its prey ; their scream was on the earth.  
*Battle of Maldon*, 106.

and very commonly of the second class, when lengthened ;

Thurh | gewæld | God | es : wuldres bearnum.  
*Cæd. Gen.* 11.

Wæs | min dream | dryht | lic : drohtad hyhtlic.  
*Riming Poem*, 39.

Thurh | his word | wes | an : wæter gemæne.  
*Cæd. Gen.* 158.

O | fer scild | scot | en : swilce Scyttisc eac. *Brunanburh*, 19.

Us | is riht | mic | el : thæt we rodera weard. *Cæd. Gen.* 1.  
geomre gastas : wæs | him gylp | for | od ! *Cæd. id.* 69.

modes mynlan : o | fer mægth | giun | ge. *Alf. Met.* 26. 67.

Sah to setle : thær | læg secg | mæn | ig. *Brunanburh*, 17.

Godes ahwurfon : hæf | don gielp | mic | el. *Cæd. Gen.* 25.

gewendan mid wihte : that | hie word | God | es.  
*Cæd. id.* 428.

Glosed the Gospel : as | hem good | lik | ed.  
*Piers Plowman. B. prol.* 60.

Worthing and wandring : as | the world | as | keth.  
*P. P. id.* 19.

<sup>1</sup> See page 129.

<sup>2</sup> Sydney has used them in the song quoted at page 151. But he adopted this singular rhythm, avowedly, as an experiment.

It is nought by the bishop : that | the boy | prech|eth.  
*P. P. id. 80.*

O there are divers reasons : to | dissuade|, broth|er.<sup>1</sup>  
*B. Jonson. Ev. M. in his H. 2. 1.*

This section is sometimes, though but rarely, found doubly lengthened.

Menniscs metes : ac | hi ma | luf|edon. *Alf. Met. 26. 91.*

### THE SECTION 2 l. p.

can only be of the second class. It is found both in Anglo-Saxon rhythms and in the old English alliterative metre.

cwæth | that his lic | wer|e : leoht and scene.  
*Cæd. Gen. 265.*

Her sire Typhæus was, who mad with lust,  
 And drunk with blood of men, slain by his might,  
 Through incest her of his own mother Earth  
 Whil|om begot|, be|ing : but half | twin of | that birth|.  
*F. Q. 3. 7. 47.*

I shop me into shrowdes : as | I a shepe | wer|e.  
*P. P. B. prol. 2.*

There preched a pardoner : as | he a preoste | wer|e.  
*P. P. id. 68.*

What says the other troop ! : They | are dissolv'd|, hang|'em.  
*Cor. 1. 1. 208.*

Why | are you vex'd|, la|dy : why | do you frown ?|  
*Comus, 666.*

### THE SECTION 3. p.

is more rare, but is occasionally met with ; and, of course, must be of the first class.

thrang | thrys|tre genip| : tham the se theoden self.  
*Cæd. Gen. 139.*

heold | heof|ona frea| : tha hine halig God. *Cæd. id. 1404.*

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[<sup>1</sup> Gifford reads—"to dissuade me."—W. W. S.]

—— You shall close prisoner rest,  
Till that the nature of your fault be known  
To the Venetian state : come | bring | him away |.

*Oth.* 5. 2. 335.

Where be these knaves? What |! no | man at door |,  
To hold my stirrup, nor to take my horse?

*T. of the Shrew,* 4. 1. 124.

The section 5 *p.* is rare. It is found, however, in the old romance of Sir Tristrem, and was not unknown to the Anglo-Saxons.

The folk | stode | unfain |  
Befor that levedi fre,  
"Rouland my Lord is slain,  
He speketh no more with me."

The folk stood sad  
Before that lady free,  
"Roland my lord is slain,  
He speaketh no more with me."

*Tristr.* 1. 22.

The Douke | an | swerd then |,  
"Y pray mi Lord so fre,  
Whether thou blis or ban,  
Thin owen mot it be."

The Duke answer'd then,  
"I pray my Lord so free,  
Whether thou bless or curse,  
Thine own may it be."

*Trist.* 1. 77.

hæste hrinon : ac hie | hal | ig God |.

*Cæd. Gen.* 1396.

hyge hreoweth : that hie | heof | onric | e.

*Cæd. id.* 426.

A modern poet has used this section in one of those songs which have been already mentioned, and which recall, so vividly, the lyrical outpourings of our dramatists. The propriety of doing so may, however, admit of some question. Even in the sixteenth century, when the sectional pause was common, it was seldom introduced into a *song*, unless its place in the rhythm was marked out by some regular law. To introduce it at random now, when the pause is obsolete, seems little better than throwing a needless difficulty in the way of the reader. How many persons would read the following lines, for the *first* time, without a blunder?

The brand is on thy brow,  
A dark and guilty spot,  
'Tis ne'er to be erased,  
'Tis ne'er to be forgot.



The brand is on thy brow,  
 Yet I must shade the spot,  
 For who will love thee now  
 If I | love | thee not | ?

Thy soul is dark, is stain'd,  
 From out the bright world thrown,  
 By God and man disdain'd,  
 But not by me—thy own. *The Felon's Wife.*<sup>1</sup>

The section 5. *p.* when lengthened, is met with of the second class, not only in the Anglo-Saxon, but also in the old English alliterative metre, and the works of our dramatists. In this last division of our literature, we occasionally find it without the lengthening syllable.

For that it sav'd me, keep it. In like necessity,  
 Which God protect thee from : it may | protect | thee | .<sup>2</sup>  
*Per. 2. 1. 134.*

What shall I be appointed hours, as though belike  
 I knew not which to take : and what | to leave, | ha | ?  
*Tam. of the S. 1. 1. 103.*

———— Are bees  
 Bound to keep life in drones : and i | dle moths | ? No | .  
*Ben Jonson. Ev. M. out of his H. 1. 1.*

These examples, however, are very rare. The *lengthened* section is common.

Douk Morgan was blithe	Duke Morgan was blithe
Tho Rouland Riis was down,	When Roland Riis was down,
He sent   his sond   swith   e,	He sent his mesenger quickly,
And bad all schuld be boun.	And bade all should be boun.
And to his lores lithe,	And to his hests attend,
Redi to his somoun,	Ready at his summons,
Durst non oyain him kithe,	Durst none against him strive,
Bot yalt him tour and toun.	But yielded him tow'r and town.

*Tristrem, 1. 24.*

To sek | e seint | Jam | es : and seintes in Rome.  
*P. Ploughman, B. prol. 47.*

But on | a May | mor | we : upon Malverne hilles.  
*P. Ploughman, B. prol. 5.*

<sup>1</sup> [From English Songs, by Barry Cornwall, 1832, p. 140.]

<sup>2</sup> [In the Globe edition: "The which the gods protect thee from!—may defend thee."]

Nay more | than this |, broth | er : if I should speak, '  
He would be ready, &c. *B. Jonson. Ev. M. in his H. 2. 1.*

beorhte bliase : wæs heor | a blæd | mic | el. *Cæd. Gen. 14.*

gæstes snytru : thy læs | him gielp | sceth | the.  
*Exeter MS. Christ, 684.*

A love of mine ? I would : it were | no worse |, broth | er.  
*B. Jonson. Ev. M. in his H. 4. 1.*

Hark what I say to thee : I must | go forth |, Thom | as.  
*Same, 4. 6.*

It may here be observed, that if the section of an Anglo-Saxon couplet take the pause, the alliteration almost always falls on the syllable which *precedes* it. If the alliteration be double, it falls also (with very few exceptions) upon the syllable which *follows* the pause. These observations will also apply to the old English alliterative metre.

#### THE SECTION 7. *p.*

admits of only one form. From the peculiar nature of the rhythm, the pause *must* fall between the first and second accented syllables.

Of all those sections which contain the pause, this is the one which has played the most important part in our literature. It is rarely met with in the Anglo-Saxon, but was very generally used by our old English poets, by the poets of the Elizabethan æra, by Shakespeare, and by Milton. It is the only one of our pausing sections which survived the sixteenth century, and it is found occasionally re-appearing, even after Milton's death. Burns has used it once—probably the last time it has been patronized by any of our classical writers.

This section occurs so frequently, as to render necessary a more careful arrangement than we have hitherto found practicable. We shall begin with the verse of three accents, of which several examples are found in the romance of *Tristrem*.

The forster, for his rightes,  
The left | schul | der yaf he |,  
Wit hert | liv | er and ligh | tes,  
And blod tille his quirré.

The forester for his rights  
The left shoulder gave he,  
With heart, liver and lights,  
And blood for his share.

*Tristrem*, 1. 46.

Mi fader me hath forlorn,  
Sir Rohant sikerly,  
The best | blow | er of horn |,  
And king of venery.

My father hath me lost,  
Sir Rohant truly,  
The best blower of horn,  
And king of venery.

*Tristr.* 1. 49.

"Your owhen soster him bare;"  
The king | lith | ed him than |,  
Y nam sibbe him na mare,  
Ich aught to ben his man.

Your own sister bare him,  
—The king listened [to him] then—  
I am akin to him no more,  
I ought to be his man.

*Tristr.* 1. 66.

Among the verses of five accents, which contain this section, 7 p : 5 is the one the most commonly met with in our poetry. The orthodox number of its syllables, is doubtless one of the causes of its popularity.

I have this day ben at your chirche at messe,  
And said a sermon to my simple wit,  
Not all | af | ter the text | : of ho | ly writ |.

*Sompnoure's Tale*; C. T. 7370.

The Mar | kep | yt the port | : of that | willage |,  
Wallace knew weill, and send him his message.

*Wallace*, 4. 359.

He callyt Balyounne till ansuer for Scotland,  
The wyss | lord | is gert him | : sone brek | that band |.

*Wallace*, 1. 75.

And cry'd | mer | cy, sir Knight | : and mer | cy, Lord |.

*F. Q.* 2. 1. 27.

At last | turn | ing her fear | : to fool | ish wrath |,  
She ask'd—

*F. Q.* 3. 7. 8.

Cupid their eldest brother, he enjoys

The wide | king | dom of love | : with lord | ly sway |.

*F. Q.* 4. 10. 42.

So peace | be | ing confirm'd | : amongst | them all |,  
They took their steeds—

*F. Q.* 4. 6. 39.

What man is he that boasts of fleshly might,  
And vain assurance of mortality,

Which all so soon as it doth come to fight

Against | spirit | ual foes | : yields by | and by .

*F. Q.* 1. 10. 1.

Let not light see my black and deep desires,  
 The eye | wink | at the hand |: yet let | that be |,  
 Which the eye fears, when it is done, to sec. *Macb.* 1. 4. 51.

The owl | shriek'd | at thy birth |: an e | vil sign |.  
*3 H. VI.* 5. 6. 44.

—— Be a man ne'er so vile, . . .  
 If he can purchase but a silken cover,  
 He shall not only pass, but pass regarded ;  
 Whereas | let | him be poor |: and mean | ly clad |, &c.  
*B. Jonson. Ev. M. out of his H.* 3. 3.

But far | be | it from me |: to spill | the blood |  
 Of harmless maids. *Fletcher. F. Sh.* 3. 1.

None else can write so skilfully to shew  
 Your praise |: ag | es shall pay |: yet still | must owe.  
*Geo. Lucy to Ben. Jons. on the Alchemist.*

Anon | out | of the earth |: a fa | bric huge |  
 Rose like an exhalation. *P. L.* 1. 710.

A mind | not | to be chang'd |: by place | or time |.  
*P. L.* 1. 253.

Bird, beast |, in | sect, or worm |: durst en | ter none |.  
*P. L.* 4. 704.

Is pain to them  
 Less pain |, less | to be fled |: or thou | than they |  
 Less hardy to endure ? *P. L.* 4. 918.

And when a beast is ded, he hath no peine,  
 But man | af | ter his deth |: mote we | pe and plein | e.  
*Knights Tale; C. T.* 1321.

Writings all tending to the great opinion  
 That Rome | holds | of his name |: wherein | obscure | ly  
 Caesar's ambition shall be glanc'd at. *J. Cæs.* 1. 2. 322.

But since |, time | and the truth |: have wak'd | my judg | ment.  
*B. Jonson. Ev. M. in his H.* 1. 1.

The verse 7 *p.* : 2 is more rare.

Yet saw I Silla and Marius where they stood,  
 Their greate crueltee, and the deepe bloudshed  
 Of friends |: Cyr | us I saw |: and | his host dead |.  
*Sackville. M. for M. Induction,* 61.

Tis good, | go | to the gate |: some | body knocks |.  
*Jul. Cæs.* 2. 1. 60.

In rage |, deaf | as the sea |: has | ty as fire |. *R. II.* 1. 1. 19.

So spake | Is|rael's true king|: and | to the fiend|  
Made answer meet. *P. R.* 3. 440.

He speaks, | let | us draw near|: match|less in might|,  
The glory late of Israel, now the grief. *Samson Agon.* 178.

The section 7 *p.* is also found in the verse of six accents;  
7 *p* : 5 was the most usual combination.

She almost fell again into a swoond,  
Ne wist | wheth|er above|: she were | or un|der ground|. *F. Q.* 4. 7. 9.

—— I prithee now, my son,  
Go to them with this bonnet in thy hand,  
Thy knee | buss|ing the stones|: for in | such bus|iness  
Action is eloquence. *Cor.* 3. 2. 72.

Much care is sometimes necessary to discover this section, when it *ends* the verse. Owing to the license which certain of our poets allow themselves, in the management of their pauses, there is danger of confounding the middle pause with the sectional. We shall first give examples of the verse 2 : 7 *p.* and then of the verse 5 : 7 *p.*

Wal|lace scho said|: that full | worth|y has beyne|,  
Than wepyt scho, that pete was to seyne. *Wallace*, 2. 333.

Thre yer in pess the realm stude desolate,  
Quhar|for thair rais|: a full | grew|ous debate|. *Wallace*, 1. 43.

—— When merchant-like I sell revenge,  
Broke | be my sword|! : my arms | torn | and defaced|! 2 *H. VI.* 4. 1. 41.

### 5 : 7 *p.*

Quha sperd|, scho said|: to Saint | Marg|ret thai socht|;  
Quha ser|wit hir, | full<sup>1</sup> gret | frend|schipe thai fand|  
With Sothroun folk, for scho was of England. *Wallace*, 1. 283.

And next in order sad, old age wee found,  
His beard | all hoare|: his eyes | hol|low and blind|,  
With drouping chere still poring on the ground.  
*Sackville. M. for M. Induction*, 43.

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<sup>1</sup> [Jamieson, the editor of Wallace, actually puts a full stop after *hir*, which cuts the sentence in half, and ruins the sense. — W. W. S.]

Thrice happy mother, and thrice happy morn,  
That bore | three such | : three such | not | to be found.  
F. Q. 4. 2. 41.

—— I should be still  
Peering in maps for ports and piers and roads :  
And every object that might make me fear  
Misfortune to my ventures, out of doubt  
Would make | me sad |. *Salar*.—My wind | cool | ing my broth |  
Would blow me to an ague, when I thought  
What harm a wind too great at sea might do.  
M. of Venice, 1. 1. 17.

The lengthened section 7 l. p. is as common as the one we have been considering. It has been used by Shakespeare as a complete verse.

If you dare fight to-day, come to the field,  
If not | when | you have stom | achs. *Jul. Cæs.* 5. 1. 65.

But it was the verse 7 l. p : 1 that spread it most widely through our literature. In this verse it was used by our dramatists, and by Milton: and may be traced far into the eighteenth century.

—— For the dearth—  
The Gods, | not | the patric | ians : make | it, and |  
Your knees to them, not arms must help. *Cor.* 1. 1. 74.

No, no |, this | shall forbid | it : lie | thou there |.  
*Rom. and Jul.* 4. 3. 21.

—— Your father were a fool  
To give thee all, and in his waning age  
Set foot | un | der thy ta | ble : tut | a toy |!  
*Tam. of the Shrew,* 2. 1. 401.

—— One that dares  
Do deeds | worth | y the hur | dle : or | the wheel |.  
*B. Jons. Cynthia's Revels,* 3. 4.

More foul diseases than e'er yet the hot  
Sun bred |, thor | ough his burn | ings : while | the dog |  
Pursues the raging lion. *Fl. Fa. Sheph.* 1. 2.

Whose veins | like | a dull riv | er : far | from springs |  
Is still the same, slow, heavy, and unfit,  
For stream or motion. *Fl. Fa. Sheph.* 1. 3.

And to despise, or envy, or suspect,  
Whom God | hath | of his spec | ial : fa | vour rais'd |  
As their deliverer. *Samson,* 272.

—— Light the day, and darkness night,  
 He nam'd; thus | was the first | day : ev'n | and morn |.  
*P. L. 7. 251.*

—— That all  
 The sentence, from thy head remov'd, may light  
 On me, the cause to thee of all this woe,  
 Me, me | on | ly, just ob | ject : of | his ire |. *P. L. 10. 933.*

—— Me also he hath judg'd, or rather  
 Me not |, but | the brute ser | pent : in | whose shape |  
 Man I deceiv'd. *P. L. 10. 494.*

—— I go to judge  
 On earth | these | thy transgres | sors : but | thou know'st |  
 Whoever judg'd, the worst on me must light. *P. L. 10. 71.*

Shall he, | nurs'd | in the Pea | sant's : low | ly shed |,  
 To hardy independence bravely bred,  
 Shall he be guilty of their hireling crimes,  
 The servile, mercenary Swiss of rhymes ?  
*Burns' Brigs of Ayr, 7.*

The following are instances of the same verse lengthened.

This ilke monk let olde thinges pace  
 And held | af | tir the new | e : world | the trac | e.  
*Chau. Prol. 175.*

—— Light. . . .  
 Sprung from the deep; and from her native east  
 To journey through the aery gloom began,  
 Spher'd in a radiant cloud, for yet the sun  
 Was not |; she | in a cloud | y : tab | erna | cle  
 Sojourn'd the while. *P. L. 7. 245.*

Wherever fountain or fresh current flow'd, . . .  
 I drank |, from | the clear mil | ky : juice | allay | ing  
 Thirst. *Samson Agon. 547.*

Surrey has given us an example of the verse 7 l. p : 5.

The fishes flete with newe repayred scale,  
 The adder all her slough away she slinges,  
 The swift | swal | low pursu | eth : the fly | es smale |.  
*Description of Spring, 8.*

These are the principal combinations in which the section 7 l. p. is met with. Others, however, have occasionally been found, more especially in the old English alliterative

metre. Thus Dunbar, in his "*Twa mariit women and the wedo*," gives us an example of the verse 7 *l. p.* : 2 *l.*

I hard, | un| der ane hol| yn : hevin| lie green hew| it.  
*Dunbar, as above, l. 11.*

Such examples, however, are rare.

Before I close a book, which treats thus fully of the rhythm of English verse, it may be expected that I should notice a series of works, which have been published during the last thirty years, on the same subject, by men, some of whose names are not unknown to the public. These writers entertain a very humble opinion of those "prosodians," "who scan English verse, according to the laws of Greek metre," and they divide our heroic line, not into five feet, but into six cadences! They are not, however, so averse to foreign *terms*, as might have been looked for. With them rhythm is *rhythmus*, and an elided syllable, an *apogiatura*. One of these critics assures us, that there are *eight* degrees of English quantity; and if the reader should "deny that there is any such thing as eight degrees of it, in our language, for this plain reason, because he cannot perceive them," it will be his duty to confide in the greater experience, and better educated ear of those, who have paid more attention to the subject! I will not follow the example set by these gentlemen, when they speak of the poor "prosodian." It may be sufficient to say, that much which they advance, I do not understand, and much that I *do* understand, I cannot approve of.



## BOOK III.

## CHAPTER I.

## SYSTEMS—NATURAL AND ARTIFICIAL.

Few things appear, at first sight, more easy, or upon trial are found more difficult, than the clear and orderly arrangement of many and varied particulars. To class them according to their several relations, so that they may follow each other in due subordination, would seem rather an exercise of patience than of intellect; to require industry, or at most some little discrimination, rather than depth of thought, or an enlarged comprehension of the subject. But it has ever been by a slow and tedious process, that theory has disentangled itself from mere knowledge of fact; and we soon learn how much easier it is to collect materials, than to form with them a consistent whole. The many systems, which have been hazarded in the *exact* sciences, may well make us cautious, when we treat of matters, from their very nature, so much more vague and indeterminate.

The systems of the naturalist have been called (with no great accuracy of language) natural or artificial, accordingly as they were founded on more or less extensive analogies. The same terms have been applied to the systems of philology, accordingly as they were based on the gradual development of language, or accommodated to the peculiarities of a particular dialect. If we may use these terms, when speaking of our literature, I would venture to denounce as artificial, every system, which makes *time* or *place* the rule of its classification. The example of Warton<sup>1</sup> shows us, how difficult

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<sup>1</sup> All must admit his failure as regards the arrangement of his subject;—however much they admire the taste and learning of this accomplished scholar.

it is to follow a merely chronological arrangement ; and the claims, which have been made by local vanity or prejudice, to appropriate certain portions of our literature, are listened to with less patience, as our knowledge of that literature becomes more widely extended.

The success of our critics might have been greater, if their ambition had been less ; had they noticed with more care the outward make and fashion, and confined themselves less exclusively to the *spiritual tendencies* of our poetry. The instinct of imitation appears to have seized the points most tangible—the rhythm and the versification. The sentiments and language seem to have been considered as appurtenants of the metre, rather than as essential elements of our poetry. We find particular trains of thought, and particular idioms (in some cases amounting almost to a change of dialect) for ages appropriated to certain rhythms.

The history of our language has suffered, equally with that of our poetry, from overlooking the peculiarities of our poetical dialect. Some of our critics will have Chaucer to exhibit a faithful specimen of the English tongue, during the fourteenth century—but who, judging from style and language, would suppose him to be a contemporary of Langland ? or that, in the following century, the *same* hand <sup>1</sup> wrote the “Twa mariit women and the Wedo,” and “The Golden Targe ? ” How widely does the foreign and artificial stateliness of the ballet style differ from the rude but native vigour of our alliterative poetry !

A complete history of our rhythms would probably lead to a very satisfactory arrangement of our poetry ; and enable us to trace, with more truth and precision than has hitherto been done, at once the progress of our language, and the gradual development of our inventive genius. Unfortunately, the published specimens of our early literature are so scanty, as rarely to furnish us with an unbroken series of any early rhythm. Large gaps occur, which can only be filled up by a laborious search into manuscripts, scattered through the

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<sup>1</sup> [That of William Dunbar. The Twa Mariit Women is in the old alliterative metre. — W. W. S.].

country, and not always very easy of access.<sup>1</sup> In such cases similarity of idiom, or of subject, may sometimes aid us; and enable us to recognise a particular rhythm, when the changes it has undergone might otherwise make us hesitate.

With better means of information, I might probably see reason to modify much that is advanced in the following book; but I cannot think that any of the more important divisions would require *material* alteration.

#### ARRANGEMENT OF THE SUBJECT.

The next chapter will be devoted to the consideration of Anglo-Saxon rhythm—that main stock, from which have branched almost all the later rhythms of the language. In the third chapter, we shall treat of our sectional metres—or such as were produced by making each section a distinct verse. In the fourth, we shall trace the progress of such metres as were based on the shorter Anglo-Saxon rhythms; and in the fifth, the history of our old English alliterative metre—or, in other words, of that metre, which resulted from modifying the longer Anglo-Saxon rhythms by the accentual rhythm of the Latin chaunts. The origin of the Psalm-metres may be considered as the converse of this; they appear to be the natural growth of the Latin rhythm modified by the native rhythm of the language. These will form the subject of the sixth chapter. The metre of five accents will be considered in the seventh chapter; and the tumbling metre in the eighth. We shall, in the ninth chapter, notice certain loose rhythms, which have been occasionally used; and in the tenth, such new metres as have from time to time been invented or adopted by our English poets.

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<sup>1</sup> [It must be remembered that this statement refers to the year 1838. Since that date, a large number of MSS. have been printed by the Early English Text Society, by the Camden Society, and by various editors.—W. W. S.]

## CHAPTER II.

BEFORE we enter upon the subject of Anglo-Saxon rhythm, it may forward our inquiry, if we first throw a rapid glance over the present state [in 1838] of Anglo-Saxon literature.

Among the writers, to whom this literature has hitherto been considered as very deeply indebted, must be ranked the names of Hickes, Lye, and Conybeare. The first of these published his *Thesaurus* in 1705; Lye's *Dictionary* followed after the lapse of half a century; and Conybeare's "*Illustrations*" appeared, as a posthumous publication, so late as the year 1826.

The censures, which have been passed upon these works latterly, have been fully equal to any former eulogies. It would require much care, and some discrimination, fairly to portion out the merit due to their respective authors. Their errors, it is true, are many, but the subjects on which they speculated were *new*; and, when an art is in its infancy, an increased range of knowledge is sometimes of more importance than extreme accuracy. They, who devote themselves to discovery, have rarely time for minute investigation; and their mistakes may well claim the forbearance of those, who have profited by their labours. It is no slight praise, that the materials, which these writers furnish, are readily seized upon, even by those whose criticism has been most hostile. No one, I believe, has studied Anglo-Saxon literature, since these "*blundering works*" were published, without having them at his elbow.

The interest, which has been felt of late years in favour of these studies, has not however been confined to our own country. It has spread to the scholars of Denmark and of Germany; and their enthusiasm, backed by an unremitting industry, has given a marked impulse to Anglo-Saxon literature.

Of their various publications, the Grammar of Rask and the *Deutsche Grammatik* of Grimm, are certainly the most valuable. Upon these two works, and the influence which they have exerted, I would make a few observations; and if, in so doing, I dwell chiefly on what appear to be their defects, it should be remembered that a mistake becomes the more dangerous, the greater the merit of the work which contains it.

The first of these scholars was a native of Copenhagen, and devoted the whole of a short life to the study of the Northern languages. His knowledge of the Icelandic was accurate and profound; his *familiar* acquaintance with the kindred dialects may admit of some question. But it was as a philological critic, as one of the most zealous promoters of what may be called *comparative philology*, that he has the fairest claim to our respect. In this field he was one of the earliest labourers; and the discovery of many a curious analogy was the reward of his zeal and ingenuity. His varied knowledge enabled him to detect, by comparison, minute peculiarities of construction, which would certainly have escaped the notice of one, who had given his attention solely to a particular dialect.

It was with these advantages that he began his Anglo-Saxon Grammar; and to these he owes whatever success that work has met with. There are few English scholars who can peruse this grammar without benefit; there are probably none, who will rise from its perusal, with any very high notion of its author's candour, or even—so far as regards the Anglo-Saxon dialect—of his scholarship.<sup>1</sup> The terms in which he speaks of Hickes and Lye are but little to his credit. Without the aid derived from their labours, his book would never have been written; and though, in some cases, his mastery of the Icelandic enabled him to correct their errors, in others, his triumph, though equally loud, is far more questionable.

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<sup>1</sup> After the publication of Conybeare's "Illustrations," Rask noticed the longer rhythms of Cædmon, "which had escaped him while engaged in the first edition of his Grammar, not having Cædmon then at hand," &c. Could they have escaped the notice of any one who had read that poet?

The Accidence is by far the most valuable portion of his grammar; the Syntax and the Prosody (and more especially the latter) must, I think, be considered as failures. According to him, the alliterative syllables alone take the accent; all those which precede them, form merely a "complement," and are "toneless." Great care must be taken not to confound this complement with the verse itself, "lest the alliteration, the structure of the verse, and even the sense, be thereby destroyed!" Were these strange notions sanctioned by Anglo-Saxon prosody, the jingle of a nursery rime would be music, compared with the rhythm of Anglo-Saxon verse. He has treated Hickes' theory of a temporal metre with little ceremony—it would be difficult to say which of the two theories be the more futile, the one he has adopted, or that which he repudiates.

The great defect of the *Deutsche Grammatik* is a want of sound distinction—of a jealous and a penetrating criticism. Words of like ending, or of like beginning, are classed together, many of which we know must belong to different formations, for we can resolve them into their elements, and prove a different construction. We have also a large portion of the work, devoted to the changes of the letters; but the *laws*, which regulate these changes, are barely glanced at, and it would seem imperfectly understood, for we have letters represented as original, which are certainly corruptions; and others degraded as corruptions, which are, as certainly, original. The declensions again are divided into the weak and the strong, or, as Rask has it, into the simple and the complex; and this has been called a *natural* division. Had it any claim to such a title it would be more widely applicable; we have only to test it by some of the kindred languages, to see at once its unsoundness.<sup>1</sup> As an *artificial* system, it does not possess

<sup>1</sup> The nouns of all the Indo-European languages may, I think, be ranged under a very small number of declensions. I will venture to answer for the Sanscrit, the Greek, the Latin, the Slavish dialects, and the Gothic. Even the anomalies of the Celtic may be reduced (in part at least) under the same laws. The distinctions between the declensions are *essential*, and deeply rooted in the very structure of these languages.



the ordinary merit of convenience ; it is at once cumbersome and imperfect. His arrangement of the conjugations approaches nearer to a natural order, and is far more convenient.

But, with all these defects, the *Deutsche Grammatik* is a work of surpassing thought and labour. No man that studies the nature and structure of language, can neglect it with safety. It is a mine of learning ; and, though we may sometimes quarrel with the arrangement of its materials, we may well be grateful that such masses of knowledge have been arranged at all. In what manner they may be best turned to account in the study of language, is an inquiry of some difficulty, but of far greater interest.

Now dialect is a term merely relative. The Gothic is a dialect of the Indo-European language ; the Anglo-Saxon is a dialect of the Gothic. When we compare the Indo-European languages, we seize the points of resemblance, and pass slightly over those of difference. When we compare the Gothic languages, we find many of these points of difference become leading features—such as are, in many cases, strikingly characteristic of these new dialects. The same thing is to be expected, and certainly takes place in comparing our English dialects. To argue then from such a knowledge as we can now obtain of any parent language, to the peculiarities of a derivative dialect, requires the *greatest* caution. In studying the Anglo-Saxon, we can only look upon the *Deutsche Grammatik* as a collection of useful *hints*—hints not to be adopted at once and without reflection, but to be worked out and tested, by a careful examination of Anglo-Saxon authorities.

After the publication of these two books, Mr. Thorpe, the friend of Rask and translator of his Grammar, returned to England. To this gentleman we owe the version of Cædmon, which was published about four years ago by the Society of Antiquaries. Another gentleman,<sup>1</sup> who had, I believe,

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<sup>1</sup> [J. M. Kemble. See his account of Anglo-Saxon studies, in a letter printed in the preface to the *Bibliothèque Anglo-Saxonne*, par F. Michel, 1837.—W. W. S.]

been admitted to the intimacy of Grimm, distinguished himself about the same time by his zealous admiration of that scholar; and expressed his opinion of *English* scholarship in terms, that were, to say the least, somewhat unguarded. An answer soon appeared, and "the Controversy" followed.<sup>1</sup> In the warmth of this dispute extreme opinions have been advanced on *both* sides; some of which I think, the writers themselves would, upon reflection, see reason at least to modify.

May we not appreciate the learning of Hickes, the masterly command of idiom shown by Lye, and the elegant scholarship of Conybeare, and yet acknowledge the many grammatical errors, of which these writers have been guilty? May we not admire the patient investigation of Grimm, and the quicker but less sound perception of Rask, without blinding ourselves to their faults, or embarking with them in ill-considered theory or vague generalization?

Of these two parties, the "new Saxonists" have been certainly the most enterprising. The peculiar notions which they maintain, and act upon, have been thus stated by one of their earliest and most zealous advocates. "All persons who have had much experience of Anglo-Saxon MSS. know how hopelessly incorrect they in general are; when every allowance has been made for date and dialect, and even for the *etymological ignorance of former times*, we are yet met at every turn with faults of grammar, with omissions or redundancies of letters and words, which can only be accounted for on the supposition, that professional copyists brought to their task (in itself confusing enough) both lack of knowledge, and lack of care. A modern edition made by a person *really conversant* with the language which he illustrates, will, in all probability, be *much more like the original than the MS. copy*, which even in the earliest times was made by an ignorant and indolent transcriber. But while he makes the necessary corrections, no man is justified in withholding the original readings: for, although the laws of a language,

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<sup>1</sup> The papers on this subject appeared in the "Gentleman's Magazine" at various times during the last two years. [See Gent. Mag. 1834, 1835.]



ascertained by wide and careful examination of all the cognate tongues, of all the hidden springs and ground-principles on which they rest in common, are *like the laws of the Medes and Persians and alter not*, yet the very errors of the old writer are valuable, and serve sometimes as guides and clues to the inner being and spiritual tendencies of the language itself."

That I differ from several of the opinions here advanced, may be partly gathered from what has gone before. But I think it due to a gentleman, who has laid Anglo-Saxon literature under some obligation, to state my reasons more fully; and as the question is one of *great* importance, and as a very loose meaning is sometimes given to the words, "correct copy" and "original readings," perhaps I shall be excused, if I enter somewhat minutely into the points at issue.

Our modern editors take the liberty (without any warning to the reader) of altering the text in *three* particulars. They change the accents,<sup>1</sup> which in certain cases are used to distinguish the long vowels; they compound and resolve words; and they alter the stops and pauses—or in other words the punctuation and versification—at their pleasure.

With respect to the accents, Rask professes to have been guided by the authority of printed Anglo-Saxon works, aided by a comparison of the kindred dialects. I do not inquire if he acted up to these principles; but under the circumstances, (unable as he was to procure Anglo-Saxon MSS.) none better could have been followed. The editor of *Cædmon* informs us, that in the accentuation, "which confirms, in almost every case, the theory of Professor Rask," he has "followed the authority of MSS., and except in a few instances that of the MS. of *Cædmon* himself." I will not stop to ask, what constitutes the *theory* of Rask, or in what cases this gentleman differs from his friend, but I have compared his edition with the MS. at Oxford, and find accents

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<sup>1</sup> In the following remarks, the word *accent* has the same meaning, as is generally given it by our Anglo-Saxon editors. Much confusion might have arisen if we had ventured upon a change of phraseology.

omitted or intruded without authority, at the rate of some twenty a page—by what license of language can these be called a *few* instances?

If the reader ask what theory has been followed, after this bold departure from the original?—an answer would be difficult. The very same words are found, in one page, with long vowels, and in another with short, as if the accent were inserted or omitted, as the whim of the moment dictated.

To the edition of *Beowulf* these observations only partially apply. The editor has shown more deference to his reader, and has distinguished between theory and fact—between his own accents, and the accents of the MS.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In one of his papers (*Gent. Mag.*, Dec. 1834, p. 605) he promises to explain "the system," on which he has regulated his accentuation. Would it not have been safer policy, if he had *first* established the system, and *then* had acted upon it?

After this note was written, there appeared an article in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, explaining the system of accentuation, which was followed in the last edition of *Beowulf* [*i. e.* that by Kemble, published in 1837]. The writer dissents, and I think with much reason, from the principles on which Mr. Thorpe remodelled the accentuation of *Cædmon*, and then advances arguments in favour of his own system. These we will not examine, as it is a matter of minor importance what theory an editor may adopt, if he distinguish (and in *Beowulf* the distinction has been made) between his own notions and the contents of his MS. But there is one passage, very candidly quoted from an old grammarian, which deserves the reader's notice—I say candidly quoted, because it affords a very strong argument in a case where, as it seems to me, strong arguments were not wanting, against the theory which the writer himself espouses. From this passage, which makes mention of "the short é," it is very properly inferred, that the accent was sometimes used for the same purpose as our modern italics. It must, I think, convince every one, who has not committed himself in controversy, how little we yet know of a subject, on which so much speculation has been hazarded.

I would take this opportunity of again pressing on the reader the importance of copying our MSS. *faithfully*—I mean not only to the letter, but so as to show their peculiarities as regards punctuation, composition, &c. It is astonishing how much light may thus be thrown upon the structure of our language. For example, many Anglo-Saxon MSS. join the preposition to its substantive, and thus point to the origin of a numerous class of adverbs, *aloft*, *asleep*, *aground*, &c., *underfoot*, *underhand*, *underneath*, &c., *today*, *tonight*, *tomorrow*, &c. Again, in some MSS. several of the common prefixes are carefully separated from their compounds—the adverb *gewisse*, for example, being written *ge wisse*, or in Old English *y wisse*; and it is from these scattered elements of an adverb that modern scholarship has manufactured a verb and pro-

I cannot help thinking, however, that in the present state of Anglo-Saxon scholarship, all these speculations are premature. Here is a language, with whose accident and syntax we are very imperfectly acquainted—the nature of whose dialects we have not yet investigated—and we are endeavouring to measure the length of its vowel-sounds, with a nicety, to which they who spoke it made no pretension. It is probable that the quantity of the vowels varied with the dialects—if so, *their* peculiarities should be first studied; it is almost certain that the quantity was sometimes indicated by the spelling—if so, the system of Anglo-Saxon orthography should be first ascertained and settled.

If we look into Anglo-Saxon MSS. we find some without any accents; and few, in which they have been systematically adopted. In the Beowulf MS. the whole number of accents cannot amount to more than a few dozens. In the MS. of Cædmon, they were also at first very sparingly used; but were profusely added by the same hand that corrected the MS.

To charge these conflicting usages upon the ignorance of the writers, is a ready method of solving a very difficult question. That some of our Anglo-Saxon MSS. have been carelessly transcribed, may be admitted, but I cannot allow that such is their *general* character. Many of them are beautifully written, and have minute corrections, which show they have been revised with equal care; and these MSS. agree no better than the others, with any theory that has yet been started, on the subject of Anglo-Saxon orthography. To pare down their peculiarities to a level with German criticism, is an easy task, but one I think that is little likely to aid the progress of Anglo-Saxon scholarship.<sup>1</sup>

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noun *I wise!* Again, in many Old English MSS. the genitival ending is separated from its noun, thus *Seint Benet is scourge*, Saint Bennet's scourge—a practice, which shows us the origin of those phrases to be met with in our Liturgy and other works of the same date, *Christ his sake*, *God his love* &c. Other instances of the advantages, likely to accrue from a more careful editing of our manuscripts, might easily be collected.

<sup>1</sup> I have elsewhere suggested (p. 103) that there may have been 're-

Another license, very commonly taken, is that of compounding and resolving words.

In English we write some compounds continuously, as *redbreast*; others we split, as it were, into distinct words, as *coal mine*; or link together by means of the hyphen, as *pear-tree*. The hyphen was unknown to the Anglo-Saxons; but compounds were frequently resolved into their elements, and written as though they formed distinct words. Now there is no objection to the hyphen, if it be used only to tie together the scattered elements of a compound; for even if there be blunders in the construction of a passage, and words united that *should* be separate, yet the reader possesses an easy remedy—he has merely to strike out the hyphen, and the real text is before him. But the case is widely different, when the hyphen is also used in the *resolution* of words. He must then rest content with such readings as are given him. The editor is secure from criticism.

Most of our modern editors take this double license. The reader *may* think that the hyphen is occasionally used to prop a false translation, or that it sometimes mars the rhythm of a section; but he must have a greater confidence in the soundness of his opinion, than would be generally warranted by the present state of Anglo-Saxon scholarship, if he venture an objection. He *may* be quarrelling with the original, when he thinks he has only the editor to cope with. He cannot be safe unless he have his finger on the manuscript.

What is the object proposed by this resolution of words, is far from clear. Few of our editors follow the same plan; nor are there many of them consistent even with themselves. Sometimes the prefix is separated from its verb; sometimes linked to it by means of the hyphen; sometimes the two are written continuously.<sup>1</sup> The common

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degrees of Anglo-Saxon quantity. This, of course, is mere hypothesis, and would be given up with very little reluctance; but I certainly could wish to have had an opportunity of testing its correctness.

<sup>1</sup> The English reader must not consider this a mere question of orthography.

adjectival compounds<sup>1</sup> generally take the hyphen, but in many hundred instances, they are separated into distinct words, as *mere flod*, *god cyning*,<sup>2</sup> &c. &c. So that not only is the integrity of the manuscript violated, but the reader gets nothing in exchange—not even a theory.<sup>3</sup>

The versification of our MSS. has been treated with little more ceremony than their system of accents.

I have already mentioned, that Anglo-Saxon poetry was written continuously like prose. In some manuscripts (as in that of Cædmon) the point separated the sections; in others (as in the Dunstan Chronicle) it separated the couplets; in others (as in the Beowulf MS.) the point was used merely to close a period, and the versification had nothing but the rhythm to indicate it.<sup>4</sup> The point was *often* omitted; and sometimes, though very rarely, it was misplaced. Now it would seem easy enough, to copy the MS. correctly, and to mention in the notes the omission or the false position of the points; and it is matter of regret, that the confidence reposed in some eminent grammarian has too often led our editors to “restore” the versification, without informing the reader. The alterations which have been thus made are, I fear, but too numerous; and more

It sometimes happens, that an adverb is tacked as a prefix to a verb, and not only the rhythm of the line, but even its sense, destroyed.

<sup>1</sup> See p. 99.

<sup>2</sup> The hyphen is very commonly forgotten, when an adjective and substantive are compounded, (even in cases where change of accent points infallibly to a compound,) unless the peculiarities of the *syntax* be such, as cannot be got rid of without it.

<sup>3</sup> In the MSS. from which I have taken the extracts, which will shortly be submitted to the reader, the preposition is generally joined to its substantive, as *onbearm*. I have written them separately, as I could not satisfy myself whether or not this custom applied to *all* the prepositions. The negative particle *ne* is also generally joined to its verb; and sometimes the article to its substantive. I have written them separately in *all* cases. With these exceptions, the reader will have only to strike out the hyphen, to get a tolerably pure text.

<sup>4</sup> The writer generally leaves a slight interval between his sections; but, as might be expected, this is often forgotten. The Editor should have mentioned the omission of the dot, and have let his reader know that he was, to a great extent at least, answerable for the versification.

than one scholar has thus impaired his usefulness, whose services, in other respects, may well deserve our thanks.<sup>1</sup>

In their punctuation, the Anglo-Saxons used three kinds of stops. The first was somewhat like our semicolon (;); the second was merely the same stop reversed (:); and the third consisted of three dots (⋯). Most manuscripts have merely the rhythmical point (.), and that too in cases where it is required also to mark the versification—a clear proof how closely the two systems were at first connected. The same hand that altered the spelling, and sometimes even the wording of the Cædmon MS. added also the stops. The task however was carelessly performed; and Junius has pointed *his* edition, according to his own notions of the author's meaning. The compiler of the *Analecta*, also, has furnished his text with commas, semi-colons, &c. in the same way as if it were an English composition; but as the sense often depends on the punctuation, the reader ought always to know, how far it is borne out by the original. Many persons may differ with an editor, in the construction of a passage, who would not have confidence enough to impugn the punctuation of a manuscript.<sup>2</sup>

A modern edition therefore aims at being an *improved version*, and not merely a copy of the MS. The editors claim the merit of *restoring* the text; and unfortunately so little do they distrust their amendments, as seldom to give the reader that warning he has a right to look for. These claims we have examined; but there are others (and strangely inconsistent ones) sometimes brought forward, which should not pass, altogether, without obser-

<sup>1</sup> The evening before I examined the MS. of Cædmon I marked down between twenty and thirty cases of doubtful prosody. In every one of these instances, but two, the text had been altered.

The motive for these changes was in general obvious enough; it was to bring two alliterative syllables into the first section—or to begin the second section with the *chief-letter*, as Rask terms it—or to support some of the other prosodial canons of that grammarian. To effect these objects, we have periods ending in the midst of a section, and pauses immediately between a preposition and its substantive!

<sup>2</sup> As I believe the Cædmon MS. *originally* had no stops, I have in such extracts as are taken from it, seldom thought it worth while to notice them.

vation. One editor, who has entirely altered the accentuation of his manuscript—who has often changed the versification—who has compounded words and resolved words, “lays claim at least to one merit, that of exhibiting a *faithful* text.” Another, who is no less free in the composition and resolution of words, and who marks in the same way an erasure of the MS., and (what he considers to be) a defect in the syntax or the prosody, tells us, he has printed his “text letter for letter as he found it.” It seems difficult to reconcile these professions with the claims elsewhere made by these gentlemen, and hardly possible to reconcile them with their practice.

In the following extracts, we shall first state the law which defines the versification; and then carefully note every deviation from it. When the point occurs in the midst of a section, it will be inserted, so as to give the reader every means of forming an independent judgment. It will be seen, that the point often divides a *compound section*, in a way that strongly supports the hypothesis, elsewhere started, as to the origin of such section.<sup>1</sup>

The sections will be ranged in couplets, notwithstanding the protest of Rask. It will be useless to follow this critic through his long, and (as it seems to me) very inconclusive reasoning upon this subject. Half a dozen sentences may embrace all the merits of the question. Our English verse was at first written like prose, the point sometimes separating the couplets, but generally the sections. About the end of the twelfth century, a new mode of writing came into fashion, and a line was given to each couplet. The Icelanders followed a different plan, and made each section a distinct verse; but I have very seldom seen regular alliterative metre, so written, in English. As far therefore as *authority* goes, an Icelandic would naturally make a verse of each section, and an Englishman of each couplet. It is

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<sup>1</sup> P. 159. A scrupulous adherence to the punctuation of the manuscript will also leave open another question, which cannot, I think, be looked upon as fully decided—the question, I mean, whether an alliterative section ever occurs *singly*.

however, as Conybeare remarked, a mere question of convenience. I prefer the couplet for Anglo-Saxon verse, because in such form it seems better calculated to illustrate the origin of our later rhythms.

In marking the accented syllables, I have met with great difficulty; and fear I have sometimes mistaken the rhythm of my author. It might perhaps be sufficient to say, it was a work of difficulty, and the *first* time it had been attempted; but it may also be said, that much of the difficulty arises from the liberties, which have been taken with the versification of our manuscripts.<sup>1</sup> I have been very anxious to arrive at accuracy; for the scansion of an Anglo-Saxon verse is not a matter of mere curiosity. There can be little doubt that the modern accentuation of our language is mainly built upon that of its earliest dialect; and that we must investigate the latter, before we can arrive at any satisfactory arrangement of the former.

As to the English version, I fear it will often stand in need of the reader's indulgence. I cannot hope to escape much better than those who have attempted the task before me; and in every translation from the Anglo-Saxon, that has fallen under my notice, there are blunders enough to satisfy the most unfriendly critic. The Anglo-Saxon student has to work against the evils of a scanty vocabulary,<sup>2</sup> an imperfect grammar, and idioms, that must

<sup>1</sup> I once wished to ascertain the accentuation of a particular class of compounds, and collected for that purpose seventeen sections, in which such compounds occurred. Of these, *nine* were indecisive; *five* gave one mode of accentuation, and *three* another. I satisfied myself, that in one of these sections a hyphen had been used improperly, but the other two continued puzzles, till I had an opportunity of seeing the MS., when I found the point had in both cases been misplaced by the Editor.

I felt half inclined to agree with the learned biographer of Ritson, and to denounce the corruption of a MS. *as a crime little less than felony!*

<sup>2</sup> Much difficulty arises from the vast number of duplicates and triplicates among our Anglo-Saxon nouns. Very many of these have more than one termination and more than one gender and declension. Other nouns (both substantive and adjective) occasionally take an *e* in the nominative, and as *e* is one of the commonest inflexions, the perplexity, thence arising, is considerable. A collection of these puzzling synonymes would be of the greatest service to the student.



have taken root in the very infancy of our language. Price appears to have been the only scholar, who has fairly met these difficulties with a running commentary. I shall endeavour to follow his example, but as the discussion of some questions may be too lengthy for the compass of a note, I shall take this opportunity of discussing certain

#### ANGLO-SAXON IDIOMS.

There are some words, compounded of an adjective and a substantive, in which the latter, though it remains unchanged, has the force of an inflected noun. It would seem, that this class of compounds place the negative prefix before the adjective. Thus *græs-grene* is green with grass, and *græs-ungrene*<sup>1</sup> not green with grass. The modern idiom, which most nearly resembles the present, is found in the comparison of certain compounds, wherein one adjective qualifies another, as *heavenly-bright*, *sweet-tempered*. These are compared by adding the *er* and the *est* to the *first* adjective.

Thrice blessed they, that master so their blood,  
To undergo such maiden pilgrimage;  
But *earthlier happy* is the rose distill'd,  
Than that, which, withering on the virgin thorn,  
Grows, lives, and dies, in single blessedness.

*M. N. D.* 1. 1. 74.

And many strokes, though with a little axe,  
Hew down and fell the *hardest-timber'd* oak.

3 *H. VI.* 2. 1. 54.

Well, well, he was the *covert'st shelter'd* traitor  
That ever lived.

*Rich. III.* 3. 5. 33.

Farewell then, *fairest cruel!* all thoughts in me  
Of women perish. *Massinger. Maid of Honour*, 1. 2.

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<sup>1</sup> In the last edition of *Cædmon*, these are made two distinct words. It is clear, from the prosody, that they are compound; for the prefix loses its accent.

Græs|-úngrén|e : gár|secg theah|te.

*Cæd. fol. 7. Gen. 117.*

All those we saw were the *ugliest-awkward* hoidens in nature.  
*Swinburne. Trav. in Spain, Letter 44.*

Again, certain compound prepositions may be divided, so as to inclose the substantive they govern.

Tha thry comon : *to theodne foran*<sup>1</sup>

The three came the king before. *Cæd. fol. 176. Dan. 93.*

Burnon scealcas

*Ymb ofn útan*

Burnt were the servants

Round about the oven. *Cæd. fol. 186. Dan. 253.*

This idiom we long retained in the phrases, *to God-ward, to him-ward, to Windsor-ward, &c.* There was also an idiom very like it in the Latin.

It would seem too, that, when one substantive qualified another, the compound sometimes opened and admitted an adjective.

The Anglo-Saxon *winter weder, mere wic, sumer dæg, &c.* answer to our modern phrases, *winter weather, sea station, summer day, &c.* In the following passages these compounds admit the adjective—at least it is only on this supposition, that I can render them into intelligible English.

Byrnende ffr : and beorht sumor

Nergend hergath : niht somod and dæg

And thec landa gehwile : leoht and theostro

Herige on háde : somod hát and ceald

And thec frea mihtig : forstas and snawas

*Winter biter*<sup>2</sup> *weder* : and wolcen-faru

Lofige on lyfte

<sup>1</sup> I quote from Mr. Thorpe's text, but refer to the page of the *manuscript*, which is given in both the Editions.

<sup>2</sup> Grimm links these two words together as a compound, *winter-biter*, bitter as winter. Mr. Thorpe follows his example, but *evades* the consequence,

And thee, mighty Lord! the frosts and snows

The *winter's bitter weather*, and the heaven's course,

Praise in the air.

He cannot keep both his compound and his translation. One or other must be given up.

Burning fire, and bright summer  
 Hery [praise] their preserver! night also and day;  
 And Thee each land, light and darkness,  
 Hery in their station! also heat and cold;  
 And Thee, mighty Lord, the frosts and the snows,  
 The bitter winter weather, and the welkin's course  
 Praise in the lyft! *Cædmon, fol. 192. Dan. 374.*

For thæm that is sio an rest : eallra geswinca  
 Hyhtlicn hyth : heaum ceolum  
 Modes usses : *mere* smylta *wic*<sup>1</sup>

For that it is the one rest of all labours,  
 The desired haven for the lofty barks,  
 Our soul's mild roadstead. *Alfred. Met. 21. 10.*

Hwæt thu fæder wercest  
*Sumur lange*<sup>2</sup> *dagas* : swithe hate  
 Thæm winter dagum : wundrum sceorta  
 Tida getiohhast

Lo! thou, Father, makest  
 Long summer-days intensely hot,  
 And to the winter-days wondrously short  
 Times hast given! *Alfred. Met. 4. 18.*

Æthelstan cyning : eorla drihten  
 Beorna beag gifa : and his brothor eac  
 Eadmund ætheling : ealdor langne<sup>3</sup> tîr  
 Geslôgon set sake

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Fox renders the line thus,

Of our mind a great tranquil station,

but this would require *mere* instead of *mere*.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Fox (from whose edition I am quoting) makes these two words a compound, *sumur-langne*, long as summer; but, like Mr. Thorpe, he evades the consequence,

Behold! thou, O Father, makest

Summer long days very hot.

Compare also the following :

thær ic sittan mot *sumor langne dæg*.

*Exile's Complaint [Klage der Frau], 37.*

theah ic gesitte *sumer longne dæg*.

*Juliana, 495.*

None of these mad *mustachio-purple-hued* maltworms.

<sup>1</sup> *Hen. IV. 2. 1. 83.*

Al the *winter-long* night.

*Lay le Freine, 143.*

<sup>3</sup> Lye renders the passage, *langne tîr geslôgon*, &c., thus—diuturnam victoriam reportârunt in prælio. Mr. Thorpe has greatly improved upon Lye,

Æthelstan king, of earls the Lord,  
 Of barons the beigh-giver, and his brother eke  
 Edmund the etheling, elders a long train  
 Slew in battle. *Brunanburgh War-Song, 1.*

There is another idiom, or, to speak more accurately, a rule of syntax, which has hitherto been most strangely overlooked. A substantive singular, when taken in a collective sense, may always be joined to a verb plural. Almost every page of Anglo-Saxon poetry will furnish us with examples.

*Magth sithedon*  
 Fæmnan and wuduwan : freondum beslegene  
 From hleow-stôle : *hettend læddon*  
 U't mid sœtum : abrahames mæg

The maidens departed—  
 Damsels and widows, shorn of their friends ;  
 From his place of refuge, the spoiler led  
 Out with his goods, Abraham's kinsman.

*Cæd. fol. 94. Gen. 2011.*

Thær æfter him : folca thrýthum  
*Sunu simeónes : sweetum comon*

There after them, in peopled bands,  
 The sons of Simeon came in crowds,

*Cæd. fol. 160. Exod. 340.*

Him on laste *seil*  
 Wuldor spedum welig : wíde *stóðan*  
 Gifum growende : on godes ríce  
 Beorht and geblædfast : buendra leas

On their hinder path,  
 Rich with glories, their seats stood widely .

by making *ealdor-langne* a compound—"gained life-long glory in the battle ;" *wíde slean* in Glossary. But objections may be taken even to this version. In the first place, I am not satisfied, that *tír* (glory) is masculine. In the second place, the meaning given to the word *slean* may be doubted. *Slean*, to strike, to slay, has two sets of derivative meanings ; to fix (as it were by striking), to establish—as *gæteld slean*, to fix a tent, *eorldom slean*, to establish an earldom ; and to gain (as it were by striking), in which sense we might even now use the primitive verb, as *sige slean*, to strike a victory, *húthe slean*, to strike a prey. But I think we should be pushing this analogy too far, if we talked of *striking a glory* ; at least, I would not so translate, without a clearer authority than the passage before us. Lastly, the promise of merely *life-long* glory, for such a victory, would be much too meagre flattery.

(With riches flourishing within God's realm,  
Bright and precious!)—void of habitants.

*Cæd. fol. 5. Gen. 86.*

Handum *brugdon*  
*Hæleth* of scæthum : hring-mæled sword

With their hands the heroes  
Drew from the sheaths the ring-colour'd sword.

*Cæd. fol. 93. Gen. 1991.*

*Eodon* tha sterced-ferththe *hæleth* <sup>1</sup>

Went the stern-hearted heroes.

*Judith, 55.*

*Wigend cruncon* : wundum werige

The warriors quailed, with wounds dispirited.

*Death of Byrthnoth, 301, 302.*

An adjective, connected with the noun, may be put in the singular number, as in the third example; or in the plural, as in the last.<sup>2</sup>

It is curious to observe how this idiom has been rendered in our translations. Sometimes, when the meaning was obvious, it has been rightly construed, and the "false concord" passed over in silence. In other cases, it has led to very bad translation, and more than once to very unsound criticism. It has been holden<sup>3</sup> for instance, that the masculine nouns of the second declension sometimes reject their plural ending *as*; so that *hettend*, *wigend*, and *hæleth* may stand for *hettendas*, *wigendas*, and *hælethas*. But this hypothesis is much too narrow for its object. In the examples above quoted, *mægth* is feminine, and has *mægtha* in the plural; *setl* is neuter, and has *setlu*; and *sunu*, though masculine, forms its plural in *a*, *suna*.

There is yet another rule, which is no less important than the last, and appears to have been equally overlooked. The passive participle may be considered as declinable, or not, at the pleasure of the writer.

<sup>1</sup> [Grein puts *eodon* and *hæleth* in different lines.—W. W. S.]

<sup>2</sup> So in Livy: "Tarquinius moribundum quum qui circa erant exceperunt. illos fugientes lictores comprehendunt. Clamor inde concursusque *populi mirum* quid rei esset."—Book i. ch. 41.

<sup>3</sup> See Glossary to the *Analecta*, under the heads *Gar*, and *Helak*; and *Cædmon*, ed. Thorpe, p. 278, note *b*. And see Grimm, *Deut. Gramm.* i. 647.

Oththæt he áðám : on eorþ-ríce  
 Godes hánd gescéaft : gearone fínðe  
 Wíslíce *gewórkht* : and his wíf sómed

Until he Adam upon earth's realm,  
 God's handywork! ready found  
 Wisely y-wrought; and his wife with him.

*Cæd. fol. 23. Gen. 454.*

Gewitan him tha gangan : geomer-móde  
 Under beám-sceade : blæde *bereafod*

Gan they then depart, sad at heart,  
 Under tree-shadow—joy-bereft!

*Cæd. fol. 40. Gen. 858.*

And him bi twégen : beámas stódon  
 Tha wæron útan : ófstes geblædene  
*Gewéred* mid wæstne

And them beside, two trees there stood;  
 They were without, with food y-laden—  
 Covered with fruit.

*Cæd. fol. 23. Gen. 460.*

Her wæs his maga sceard  
 Freonda *gefylled* : on folc-stede  
*Beslegen* æt sace : and his sunu forlet  
 On wæl-stowe : wundum *forgrunden*  
 Geonge æt guthe

Here was loss of kin—  
 Of friends hewn down—on crowded field  
 Slain at the fight! and his son he left  
 On the carnage-place, with wounds laid low,  
 Though young in war. *Brunanburgh War-Song, 40.*

Ne wearth wæl máre  
 On thys iglande : æfre gita  
*Folces afylled*

Was no greater carnage,  
 Ever yet within this island,  
 Of men hewn down— *Brunanburgh War-Song, 65.*

Adjectives also, when they partake of the character of participles, are sometimes used without declension.

Nalles wolcnu tha giet  
 Ofer rúmne grúnd : régnas bæron  
 Wana<sup>1</sup> mid winde

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Thorpe has rightly translated this passage, but doubts the correctness of his translation, for, "to justify it, we ought to have *wanne* in the original."

Nor clouds as yet  
 O'er the wide earth bore rains  
 Wan-coloured with wind. *Cæd. fol. 12. Gen. 214.*

That hie wurdon *læth* Gode  
 That they might be loathed of God. *Cæd. fol. 23. Gen. 452.*

Heo waron *leof* Gode  
 They were beloved of God. *Cæd. fol. 13. Gen. 244.*

*Æt* thisses ofætes : thonne wurthath thín eagan swa *leokt*.  
 Eat of this fruit—then will be thine eyes so brightened.  
*Cæd. fol. 27. Gen. 564.*

It would be easy to multiply examples; but our limits are narrow, and will oblige us to pass over some peculiarities of Anglo-Saxon grammar, which I would fain have noticed. We will proceed at once to the main subject of our injury.

Cædmon, of whom we have heard so much, was one of those gifted men, who have stamped deeply and lastingly upon the literature of their country, the impress of their own mind and feelings. He was the first Englishman—it may be, the first individual of Gothic race—who exchanged the gorgeous images of the old mythology for the chaster beauties of Christian poetry. From the sixth to the twelfth century, he appears to have been the great model, whom all imitated, and few could equal. For upwards of five centuries, he was the father of English poetry; and when his body was discovered in the reign of our first Henry, it seems to have excited no less reverence than those of the kings and saints by which it was surrounded.

Nothing shows more clearly the influence which this extraordinary man exerted upon our national modes of thought and expression, than a comparison between the Anglo-Saxon and early Icelandic literatures. So striking is the contrast, both as to style and subject, that Rask has even ventured to maintain they were radically distinct. A better knowledge of the Anglo-Saxon would have shown him his mistake. But though it might easily be proved, that our fathers had poems on almost all the subjects which were once thought peculiar to the Eddas, yet the remains of them are so scanty.

or the allusions to them so ambiguous, as rather to baffle criticism, than to enlighten it. The revolution effected by Cædmon appears to have been complete.

The manuscript, which is supposed to contain the poems of Cædmon, was a gift from Archbishop Usher to the celebrated Junius, and by him was bequeathed to the Bodleian Library. From the style of the writing, it must have been written about the end of the tenth, or the beginning of the eleventh century; and as about that time there was an Abbott Ælfwine at Winchester, at whose expense certain manuscripts (which are still extant) were written and illuminated, much in the same way as the Cædmon manuscript, and as a head occurs among the illuminations with the name of Ælfwine written over it, it has been surmised, that *he* was the patron to whom we owe the preservation of the poems.

Junius, who published this manuscript at Amsterdam in 1665, and who was an Anglo-Saxon scholar of the first class, put the name of Cædmon upon his title-page without hesitation. The style of the poems, so strongly resembling that of the fragment preserved by Bede—the absolute identity of the subjects with those on which we know that Cædmon wrote—and the marks of antiquity so abundantly scattered throughout, were to *his* mind proofs, amply sufficient to warrant him in so doing. Hickes did not agree in this opinion; but the notions which he held upon the subject of Anglo-Saxon dialect, and upon which he chiefly grounded his dissent, have been long since exploded.

Versions of Cædmon have been twice attempted; first by Lye, and afterwards by Mr. Thorpe. Lye's translation has never been published; but if we may judge from such extracts as appear in his Dictionary, I would say he has often shown great sagacity, and a singularly familiar acquaintance with Anglo-Saxon idiom. His MS. is now the property of the Society of Antiquaries, having been presented to that body by Mr. Thorpe, the well-known bookseller. The editor of Cædmon has denied any knowledge of this manuscript version; but of the many and copious extracts to be found in the dictionary he has diligently availed himself. In several



instances he has corrected Lye's mistakes; but a version of *Cædmon* is a work of *immense* difficulty, and it reflects no discredit on either of these scholars to say, that many and very large portions of the poem *have not yet been translated*.

As the point separates the sections in the MS., the reader may assume that it always coincides with the middle and final pauses, unless a note inform him to the contrary. When the point is found in the middle of a section, it will be inserted.

Common type will be used instead of Anglo-Saxon; and, as in modern orthography *th* represents both a vocal and a whisper sound, it will stand both for *ð* and *þ*.

It is thus our earlier Milton introduces his subject to the reader;—

U's | is riht | mic | el : thaet | we rod | era weard |  
 Wer | eda wul | dor-cin | ing : word | um her | igen |<sup>1</sup>  
 Mod | um luf | ien : he | is mæg | na sped |<sup>2</sup>  
 Heaf | od eal | ra : heah | -gesceaf | ta<sup>3</sup>  
 Frea | æl | mihtig : næs | him frum | a sæf | re  
 O'r | gewor | den : ne | nu en | de cymth |  
 Ec | ean driht | nes : ac | he bith á | ric | e  
 Of | er heof | en-stol | as : heag | um thrym | mum  
 Soth | -fæst and swith- | feorm<sup>4</sup>

*Cæd. Gen. 1.*

Mickle right it is, that we heaven's guard  
 (Glory-king of hosts!) with words should hery,  
 With hearts should love. He is of pow'rs the efficacy,  
 Head of all high creations,  
 Lord Almighty! In him beginning never  
 Or origin hath been, nor end cometh now  
 To the eternal Lord; but he is aye supreme  
 Over heaven-thrones, with high majesty,  
 Righteous and mighty.

<sup>1</sup> Herian A.S. to praise, to *hery*,

And *hery* Pan with orisons and alms.

*Drayton.*

<sup>2</sup> Ille est virtutum exemplar. *Lye.* He is of power the essence. *Thorpe.*  
 I have never met with *sped* in either of these senses.

<sup>3</sup> The head of all exalted creatures.—*Thorpe.* The context clearly requires the more general and abstract term. In the MS. there is no metrical pause after *ealra*.

<sup>4</sup> Mr. Thorpe closes his period with the section, *Ofer heofen-stolas*; but the present division seems better suited to the usual flow of *Cædmon's* rhythm.

As *fitness of numbers* is one of the chief merits of this passage, I will endeavour briefly to point out, in what I conceive this fitness to consist. In other cases it will be left to the reader, to apply these or similar principles himself.

In the first line, the pause before *micel* gives that word a certain emphasis; and we have a sameness of rhythm, to mark the repetition of our Saviour's titles,

Rod | era weard |  
Wer | eda wul | dor-cining

and also to fix in the mind the double duty, which we owe to him,

Word | um her | igen  
Mod | um luf | ien

The accent thrown upon *he*, in the third line, opens the section, and is therefore, as it ought to be, strong and forcible. The repetition of the diphthong *ea* in the fourth line calls up the idea of multitude; and the pause before *ælmih̄tig*, after the flowing rhythm that preceded it, makes that word strikingly emphatic. The parallelism, which follows, is enforced by a similarity of rhythm;

Or | geword | en,                      næs | him frum | a æf | re  
Ec | ean driht | nes—              ne | nu en | de cymth |

while the flowing rhythm, in the two following sections, exhibits a contrast, which suits well the change from a negative to an affirmative proposition. The firm rhythm of the next section binds the whole together; and the last section affords us a specimen of that *elastic* rhythm, which is so often found at the close of Cædmon's periods.

Swegl | -bosmas heold |  
 Tha wær | on geset | te : wid | e and sid | e  
 Thurh | gewæld | <sup>1</sup>god | es : wul | dres bearn | um  
 Gas | ta weard | um <sup>2</sup>: hæf | don gleam | and dream | <sup>3</sup>  
 And heor | a ord | -fruman : <sup>4</sup>eng | la threat | as  
 Beorh | te bliss | e : <sup>5</sup>was heor | a blæd | mic | el  
 Theg | nas thrym | -fæste : theod | en her | edon  
 Sæg | don lus | tum lof : | heor | a lif | -frea  
 Dem | don driht | nes : <sup>6</sup>dug | ethum | <sup>7</sup>  
 Wær | on swith | e gesæ | lige

Synna ne cuthon  
 Fir | ena frem | man : <sup>8</sup>ac | hie on frith | e lif | don  
 Ec | e mid heor | a aldor : el | les ne | ongun | non  
 Rær | an on rod | erum : nym | the riht | and soth |  
 Ær | thon eng | la weard | : for o | ferhyg | de  
 Dæl | <sup>9</sup>on gedwil | de

Nol | dan dreog | an leng |  
 Heor | a self | ra ræd : ac | hie of sib | -lufan  
 God | es ahwurf | on : hæf | don gielp | mic | el  
 Thæt hie | with driht | ne : dæl | an meah | ton  
 Wul | dor-fæst | an wic | : wer | odes thrymme  
 Sid | and swegl | -torht <sup>10</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The emphatic stop.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 166, l. 26.

<sup>3</sup> Cædmon seldom uses even a riming section, without an object. The repetition of the diphthong *ea*, and the double rime in the preceding section, call up the ideas of extent and multitude. See pp. 166, 167.

<sup>4</sup>

Had lustre and joy  
 Of their original the hosts of angels,  
 Bright bliss, their reward was great :

Thorpe.

Mr. Thorpe considers the *and* redundant. I cannot see any reason for rejecting it.

<sup>5</sup> Mr. Thorpe makes *beorhte* the accusative feminine, agreeing with *bliss*, and perhaps rightly. There will be a perfect syntax with either construction.

<sup>6</sup> No metrical point after *drihtnes*.

*Gastas* the spirits, *werod* the host, and *duguth* the nobility, seem to have meant the great body of angels; while *engla-weardas*, or *gasta-weardas*, the angel-guards, or spirit-guards, were the "throned powers."

Mr. Thorpe renders the line thus :

They judged by the Lord's power.

<sup>7</sup> Here Mr. Thorpe alters his text. According to Rask, *dugethum* can have only one accent. See p. 76. Mr. Thorpe therefore (without authority from the MS. or notice to the reader) takes *weron* from the section following ;

dugethum wær | on—

thus violating what I will venture to assert is a canon of Anglo-Saxon prosody—the rule namely, which forbids us to place a stop in the midst of a section.

Heaven's depths he sway'd;  
 They were y-set, wide and far,  
 Through God's pow'r, for the sons of glory—  
 For the spirit-guards. Light had they and joy,  
 And their Creator! Angel-throngs,  
 Bliss refulgent, mickle was their meed!

Thanes, most glorious their leader heried!  
 Told joyfully the praise of their Life-king!  
 Ruled the Lord's high chivalry!  
 And were right happy!

Sins knew they not,  
 Or crimes to frame—but they in peace lived,  
 For aye with their prince. Nought else gan they  
 Uphold in heaven, save the right and true;  
 Ere that the angel-guard, by reason of pride  
 Was lost in error.

They would no longer work  
 Their own good; but they from God's  
 Father-love turn'd them. They had mickle boast,  
 That they with the Lord would share  
 The resplendent mansion, with the host's glory  
 Wide-filled and heaven-bright.

<sup>8</sup> *Synna* and *fyrena* seem to be the genitive cases after the verb *cuthon*,—  
*They knew not of sins or crimes—to frame.*

<sup>9</sup> *Lapsus est in errorem. Lye.* Sank into error. *Thorpe.*

*ðel* is probably the past tense of some verb, but I know not where Lye found the meaning he has given to it. Such a construction, too, requires the accusative *gedwilt*. I have construed *ðel* as if it were the past tense of a neuter verb *delan*, bearing the same relation to *ðel* error (Cædmon 18) as *dwelan* or *geðwelan* to *dwola* or *gedwola*. It is the best I could make of a very difficult passage.

<sup>10</sup> *Habebant jactationem magnam quod illi cum domino participare possent gloriosam mansionem, exercitus coelestis turmam. Lye.*

Mr. Thorpe renders the passage thus;

They had the great presumption  
 That they against the Lord could divide  
 The glory-fast abode, that multitude of host.

Lye considered *thrymme* as the accusative of *thrym* (it is in fact the dative); and as Mr. Thorpe follows Lye so closely, I presume he has fallen into the same mistake. It is possible that he may have found a neuter duplicate in *e*; but there is no such word as *thrymme* in his index. The passage is certainly one of difficulty. *Torht* appears to be one of those participial adjectives, which sometimes escape inflection; and *sīd* is certainly one of those adjectives which occasionally have the force of an adverb. The phrase might perhaps be written, in German fashion, *sīd- and swegl-torht*, widely and heavenly bright.

Him | thær sar | gelamp |  
 Æfst | and of | erhygd : and | thæs eng | les mod |  
 The thon | e un | ræd : ongan<sup>1</sup> | s̅er | est frem | man  
 Wef | an and weo | cean

Tha | he word | e<sup>2</sup> cwæth |  
 Nith | es ofthyr | ted : thæt he on north | -dæle<sup>3</sup>  
 Ham | and heah | -setl : heof | ena ric | es  
 Ag | an wol | de

Tha | wearth yr | re god |  
 And | tham wer | ode wrath | : the | he s̅er wur | thode  
 Wlit | e and wul | dre : sceop | tham wer | logan<sup>4</sup>  
 Wræc | licne ham | : weorc | e<sup>5</sup> to lean | e  
 Hel | le heaf | as : heard | e nith | as  
 Heht | thæt wit | e-hus : wræc | na bid | an  
 Deop | dream | a leas | : <sup>6</sup> drih | ten u | re  
 Gas | ta weard | as<sup>7</sup>

Tha | he hit gear | e<sup>8</sup> wiste  
 Syn | nihte | beseald | : sus | le gein | nod  
 Geond-fol | en fyr | e : and fæ | r-cyle |  
 Réc | e and read | e leg | e : heht | tha geond | thæt ræd | -  
                     lease hof |  
 Weax | an wit | e-brog | an

There then follow about sixty couplets, some of which contain such difficulties of construction, as would require

<sup>1</sup> Here again Mr. Thorpe has deviated from the text ; he reads

*The thone unræd ongan : ærest fremman*

<sup>2</sup> Then spake he the words. *Thorpe.*

Some neuters, I believe, occasionally take *e* in the plural, but I think it far better to construe *words* as the dative.

<sup>3</sup>

To haste . . . .

Homeward, with flying march, where we possess

The quarters of the *North*.

*Par. Lost*, 5. 686.

A foe

Is rising, who intends t'erec his throne

Equal to ours, throughout the spacious *North*.

*Par. Lost*, 5. 724.

And ye choice spirits that admonish me—

You speedy helpers, that are substitutes

Under the lordly monarch of the *North*!

Appear! -

1 *H. VI.* 3. 3. 3.

<sup>4</sup> No metrical point.

There on them fell pain,  
 Envy and pride, and that angel's mood—  
 His, who this folly gan first to frame,  
 To weave and wake.

Then in words quoth he,  
 With hate athirst, that he, on the North side,  
 House and high seat of heaven's realm  
 Would have.

Then was God ireful,  
 And wrath with the host, whom erewhile he honour'd  
 With brightness and glory. He shap'd out for that false one  
 An exile-home—anguish for his meed!  
 Hell-groans! torments dread!  
 He bade that torture-house of the exiles abide  
 Deep and joyless (he our Lord)  
 The spirit-guards.

When he knew it well,  
 Foul with lasting night, sulphur-heap'd,  
 Wide fill'd with fire, and fierce chill,  
 Reek and red low—then bade he, through that house of folly,  
 Wax high the torture-terrors!

---

more discussion, than we have now time to enter upon. We then come to the *Creation* [l. 103].

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<sup>5</sup> This is one of those puzzling duplicates, which are so apt to mislead—*weorce* and *weorce* both signify anguish.

<sup>6</sup> There may be some doubt, if the Anglo-Saxons did not pronounce these words as a compound. If so, the section would probably be accented thus—

Deop | dream | a-leas.

Here Cædmon converts the stop, indicating a sequence, into a sectional pause.

Bade the torture-house await the exiles,  
 Deep, void of joys, our Lord,  
 The guardians of spirits.

Thorpe.

If I understand this rightly, Mr. Thorpe puts *the exiles* in apposition to *the guardians of the spirits*—that is, the genitive *wæcna* in apposition to the accusative *weardas*. This must be faulty; but I have doubts as to the correctness of my own version, for *bidan* to await, to abide, generally governs a genitive. It is however the only method of construction which presents itself.

<sup>7</sup> Mr. Thorpe construes *geare* as if it were an adjective;

When he knew it ready,

—but it is doubtless the well-known adverb.

Ne | was her | tha giet | : nym | the heol | ster-scead | o  
 Wiht | geword | en : æc | thes wid | a grund |  
 Stod deop | and dim | : driht | ne frem | de<sup>1</sup>  
 Id | el<sup>2</sup> and ún | nyt

On thon | e eag | um wlat |  
 Stith | -friht cín | ing : and | tha stow | e beheold |  
 Dream | a leas | e : geseah | deorc | gesweorc |  
 Sem | ian<sup>3</sup> sin | nihte : sweart | under rod | erum  
 Wonn<sup>4</sup> | and wes | te : oth | thæt theos wor | uld-geceaft |  
 Thurh word | gewearth | : wul | dor-cyn | inges

Her ær | est gesceop | : éc | e drih | ten  
 Helm | eall | -wihta : heof | on and eorth | an  
 Rod | or arær | de : and | this rum | e land |  
 Gestath | elod | e : strang | um miht | um  
 Frea | selmihtig

Fol | de was | tha gyt |  
 Græs | -úngren | e<sup>5</sup> : gár | -sæg theah | te  
 Sweart | syn | nihte : sid | e and wid | e  
 Won | ne wæg | as

Tha | was wul | dor-torht |  
 Heof | on-weard | es gast | : of | er hólme | boren  
 Mic | lum sped | um

Met | od eng | la heht |  
 Lif | es bryt | ta : leoht | forth | cuman  
 Of | er rum | ne grúnd | : rath | e was | gefyl | led  
 Heah | -cining | es hæ's | : him | was hal | ig leoht |  
 Of | er wést | enne : swa | se wyrh | ta behead |

Tha | gesún | drode : sig | ora wal | dend  
 Of | er lag | o-flod | e : leoht | with theos | trum  
 Scea | e with scim | an : sceóp | tha bam nam | an  
 Lif | es bryt | ta : leoht | was ær | est  
 Thurh driht | nes wórd | : dæg | genem | ned  
 Wlit | e beorht | e gesceaft |

<sup>1</sup> *Fremde* has a double ending in the nominative—one vowel, the other consonantal.

<sup>2</sup> *Idol* A.S. barren, idle. Deserts idle.—*Othello*. Idle pebbles.—*Leaw*.

<sup>3</sup> *Seman* is the active verb; *semian* I believe is always neuter. In *Cædmon* 4 [l. 72], Mr. Thorpe makes it active; but to support his construction he is guilty of one or two grammatical errors, and (a far graver charge) has corrupted his text. Junius points the passage correctly.

Ne had there here as yet, save the vault-shadow,  
 Aught existed; but this wide abyss  
 Stood deep and dim—strange to its Lord,  
 Idle<sup>2</sup> and useless.

On it with eyes glanc'd  
 The stalwart king, and the place beheld  
 All joyless. He saw dark cloud  
 Lour with lasting night, swart under heaven,  
 Wan<sup>4</sup> and waste; till this world's creation  
 Rose through the word of the glory-King.

Here first shap'd the eternal Lord  
 (Head of all things!) heaven and earth;  
 Sky he rear'd, and this wide land  
 He stablsh'd—by his strong might,  
 Lord Almighty!

Earth was not as yet  
 Green with grass; ocean cover'd,  
 Swart with lasting night, wide and far,  
 Wan<sup>6</sup> pathways.

Then glory-bright,  
 Was the spirit of Heaven's-Guard o'er the water borne,  
 With mighty speed.

Bade the Angel-maker,  
 (The Life-dispenser) light to come forth  
 O'er the wide abyss. Quick was fulfill'd  
 The high King's hest—round him was holy light,  
 Over the waste, as the Maker bade.

Then parted the Victor-Lord  
 O'er the water-flood, light from darkness—  
 Shade from sheen.<sup>7</sup> Gave then names to both  
 The Life-dispenser. Light was erst,  
 By the Lord's word, named day—  
 That<sup>8</sup> beauty-bright creation!

<sup>2</sup> *Wan*, in the sense of dismal, was long known to our poetry;  
 Min is the drenching in the sea so *wan*.

*Chau. Knights Tale*; C. T. 2458.

<sup>3</sup> As to the nature of this compound, see p. 316.

<sup>4</sup> See note 4.

<sup>5</sup> Throned in celestial *sheen*.—*Milton, Hymn on the Nativity*, 245.

<sup>6</sup> Such seems to be the force of the definite adjective in this place.



Wel | lic | ode  
Fré | an<sup>1</sup> | æt frym | the : forth | -bæro tid |  
Dæg | ær | esta

Geseah | deorc | -sceado  
Sweart | swith | rian : geond sid | ne grund |  
Tha | seo tid | gewat : of | er tib | er sceac | an  
Mid | dan-geard | es<sup>2</sup>

Met | od æf | ter sceaf |  
Scir | um scim | an : scip | pend ur | e  
Æf | en ær | est : him arn | on last |  
Thrang | thys | tre genip : : tham | the se theod | en self |  
Sceop niht | e nam | an : ner | gend ur | e

Hie | gesun | drode<sup>3</sup> : sith | than æf | re  
Drug | on and dyd | on : driht | nes wil | lan  
E' | ce of | er eorth | an

Tha | com oth | er dæg |  
Leoht | æfter theos | trum : heht | tha lif | es weard |  
On mer | e-flod | e<sup>4</sup> : mid | dum weorth | an  
Hyht | lic heof | on-tim | ber : hol | mas dæl | de  
Wald | end ur | e : and | geworh | te tha |

<sup>1</sup> Words, ending in *ea* and *eo*, resolve the diphthongs into the component vowels, when they take the inflexion *æ*. Thus *frea* in the nominative is a monosyllable, but the dative *frea* is a dissyllable. So *beon*, the present infinitive of *beo*, has two syllables. This rule appears to be an important one.

Mr. Thorpe thus renders the passage,

Well pleased  
The Lord at the beginning, the procreative time.  
The first day saw the dark shade, &c.

To support this construction, he removes *geseah* to the first section; though not only does the metrical point follow *æresta*, and the rules of prosody forbid such change, but a regular stop has been added to the metrical point in the MS. The reader, as usual, has no notice of these changes.

*Sweart* appears to be one of those adjectives which are sometimes used adverbially.

<sup>2</sup> Then the time passed, over the fruitful region,  
Of mid earth.—*Thorpe*.

Here Mr. Thorpe makes *tiber sceacan*, a compound, and supposes *sceacas* a mistake for *sceatan*. The text is certainly correct. *Sceacas* is to fly or haste away, and an infinitive of some verb of motion very commonly follows the verbs *cuman*, *gewitan*, and others of the same kind. We have the very phrase in *Judith* [l. 292],

Hi tha hreowig-mode  
Wurpon hyra wæpen ofdune : *gewitan* him warig-farþhe  
On fleam *sceacan*.

Well pleas'd the Lord  
At the beginning, Creation's hour—  
Day the first!

He saw dark shadow  
Swart prevail, o'er the wide abyss—  
Then gan the day to close o'er the off'ring  
Of this mid earth.

Drove afterwards the Maker  
From the clear sheen (he our Creator!)  
The Even first. On its footsteps ran  
And throug'd dark cloud, to which the Lord himself  
Gave the name of Night—he our Redeemer!

These, being parted, sithen ever  
Dree'd<sup>4</sup> and did the Lord's will,  
For aye, o'er earth.

Then came the second day—  
Light after darkness. Bade then life's Guardian,  
On the sea-flood (in the midst) to stand  
A joyous heaven-structure. The waters he parted  
(He our Ruler!) and then he wrought

They then sorrowing  
Cast their weapons down; gan they, heavy at heart,  
To flight betake them.

In his Glossary, Mr. Thorpe makes *hrcowig*, cruel; *werig-ferht*, weary of life; and renders *sceacan*, by the verb *to shake*. These are errors into which any one might have fallen. I merely point them out, as showing, that *no one* (in the present state of Anglo-Saxon Literature) has a right to draw so largely on the good opinion of his reader, as to publish a Glossary, *without giving his authorities*.

<sup>3</sup> Mr. Thorpe makes *gesundrode* a verb.

Our preserver  
Them separated; always since  
They have suffered, &c.

<sup>4</sup> *Dreogan* A. S. to endure, to *dree*.

The sorow  
Which that I *drie* I may not long endure.

*Chau. Tra. and Cress.* 5. 296,

The word is still common in the North. See Brockett's Glossary, and Carr's Craven Dialect.

<sup>5</sup> No metrical point.

Rod | eras fæs | ten : thæt | se ric | a áhóf |  
 U'p | from eorth | an : thurh | his ag | en word |  
 Frea | sæl | mihtig

Fold | wæs áðæ | led  
 Un | der heah | -rodor | e : hal | gum miht | um  
 Wæt | er óf wæt | rum : tham | the wun | iath gyt |  
 U'n | der fæs | tenne : folc | a hróf | es<sup>1</sup>  
 Thá | com of | er fold | an : fus | <sup>2</sup> sith | ian  
 Mær | e merg | en thríd | da : nær | on met | ode | <sup>3</sup> tha gyt |  
 Wíd | lond. ne weg | as nyt | te : ác stod | bewrig | en fæs | te  
 Fol | de mid flod | e

Frea | engla heht |  
 Thurh | his word | wes | an : wæ | ter gemæn | e  
 Tha nu | under rod | erum : heor | a ry'n | e heal | dath  
 Stow | e gestefn | de<sup>4</sup> : tha stod | hrath | e  
 Holm | under heof | onun : swa | se hal | ga bebead |  
 Síd | set-som | ne

Tha | gesun | drod wæs |  
 Læg | o with lan | de : geseah | tha lif | es weard |  
 Drig | e stow | e : dug | otha hyrd | e  
 Wíd | e sæteowd | e : thá | se wul | dor-cyn | ing  
 Eorth | an nem | de

Here is the first gap in the manuscript, no less than three leaves having been torn out. We will therefore pass, at once, to the speech of Satan [l. 356]. Here Cædmon lengthens his rhythms, and assumes greater pomp of lan-

I's | thés sæng | a styd | e<sup>5</sup>. ún | gelic swith | e : 'tham oth | rum<sup>7</sup> the | we  
 sæ'r | cuthon  
 He | án on heof | on-ric | e : the me | mfn hear | ra onlag |

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Thorpe construes thus,

Water from waters, for those, who yet dwell  
 Under the fastness of the roof of nations.

I do not clearly see his meaning. Surely he cannot mean for mankind.

<sup>2</sup> *Fus* is one of those adjectives which are sometimes used as adverbs.

<sup>3</sup> Lye considered *metod* as the participle of *metan*, which, however, has *gemeten* for its participle. Mr. Thorpe, in this instance, follows Lye,

Were not meted yet  
 Wide land nor useful ways, &c.

<sup>4</sup> Mr. Thorpe makes these words the accusative plural ;

The skies—a firmament. This the mighty one rais'd  
Up from earth, by his own word,  
Lord Almighty !

Earth was parted,  
Under high heav'n, by holy might ;  
The water from the waters—those that yet won [dwell]  
Under the firmament of this world's roof.

Then gan, o'er earth, quickly advance  
The third great Morn ; nor had the Maker as yet  
Wide land, nor pathways useful—but fast beset  
With flood earth stood.

The Lord of angels bade  
By his word the waters to be collected,  
Which now, under heaven hold their course,  
In place appointed. Then quickly stood  
The sea, under heaven, (as the Holy one bade)  
Far and wide united.

Then was parted  
Water from land ; then saw our life's Guard  
(The nobles' pastor) the dry regions  
Wide display'd ; then the Glory-king  
Named earth.

---

guage. It has been supposed this speech was not unknown  
to Milton, when he wrote the first book of his *Paradise  
Lost*.<sup>5</sup>

---

This narrow stead<sup>6</sup> is much unlike to that other,<sup>7</sup> which erst we  
knew,  
High in heaven's realm, which on me my Lord bestow'd ;

---

That now, under heaven, hold their course,  
*And their places fixed.*

<sup>5</sup> It would not be difficult to show, that Milton knew nothing of Anglo-Saxon. Cædmon therefore must have been to him a sealed book, unless he procured a translation from Junius, or some other scholar of that period.

<sup>6</sup> *Styde*—place, *stead*.

Fly, therefore, fly this fearfull *stead* anon. *F. Q. 2. 4. 42.*

It is still used in the North. See Carr and Brockett.

<sup>7</sup> "Is this the region, this the soil, the clime,"  
Said then the lost Archangel, "this the seat,  
That we must change for heaven," &c.

*P. L. 1. 242.*

Theah | we hin | e for | tham al | waldan : ag | an ne mos | ton  
 Róm | igan ur | es ric | es : næfth | he theah riht | gedón |  
 Thæt | he us hæfth | befiel | led : fy'r | e to bot | me  
 Hél | le thæ | re hát | an : heof | on-ric | e benúm | en  
 Háf | ath hit | gemeár | cod : mid mon | -cynne |  
 To | geset | tane

Thæt | mé is sorg | a mæst |  
 Thæt ad | am sceal | : the wæs | of eorth | an geworht |<sup>2</sup>  
 Min | ne strong | lican : stol | beheal | dan  
 Wés | an him | on wy'n | ne : and wé | this wit | e thol | ien  
 Hearm | on this | se hel | le

Wál | á aht | e ic .<sup>3</sup> min | ra hánd | a geweáld |  
 And mos | te án | e tíð | : út | e weorth | an  
 Wés | an an | é win | ter-stund | e : thon | ne ic mid | thys wer | ode  
 A'c lic | gath me ym | be : fr | en-bend | a<sup>4</sup>  
 Ríd | eth rac | entan sal | : íc | eom ríc | es leas |.  
 Hab | bath me | swa heard | e : hel | le clom | mas  
 Fæs | te befang | en : hér | is fy'r | mic | el  
 Uf | an and neoth | one : ic á | ne geseah |  
 Lath | ran land | scipe : lig | ne aswam | ath<sup>5</sup>  
 Hát | ofer hel | le : me hab | bath hring | a gespong |  
 Slith | -hearda sál | :<sup>6</sup> sith | es amyr | red  
 Afyr | red me | mín feth | e : fét | synt gebun | dene  
 Hán | da gehæ'f | te : synt this | sa hél | -dora  
 Weg | as forwórhte :<sup>7</sup> swa | ic mid wíht | e ne mæ'g |  
 Of this | sum líoth | o-bend | um

Licg | ath me ymb | utan  
 Heárd | es ir | enes : hát | e geslæg | ene  
 Grind | las great | e : mid thy | me god | hafath  
 Gehæf | ted be | tham heals | e

Swá | íc wat | he min | ne hig | e cuthe  
 And | thæt wis | te eac | : wer | oda drih | ten

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Thorpe construes the section, "must cede our realm," but the active verb is *ryman*; *rumigan* and *rumian* are, I believe, always used as neuters.

<sup>2</sup> Or scan it thus :—

the | was of eorth | an geworht |.

<sup>3</sup> The metrical point here divides the compound section.

<sup>4</sup> *Benda* has been changed to *bendas*, in the MS. Probably *bend* was both a masculine and a feminine noun. When the text has been altered, Mr. Thorpe sometimes copies the original, and sometimes the amended reading. I have, in all cases, given the former.

<sup>5</sup> I have given to this word the same meaning as *Lye*, though I never met with it elsewhere. [It does not occur elsewhere.—W. W. S.]

Though, for the All-wielder, it we may not have—  
 Must quit us of our realm !<sup>1</sup> Yet hath he not right y-done,  
 In that he us hath fell'd, to the fiery bottom  
 Of this hot hell ; hath heaven's realm bereft us,  
 And it hath destin'd by mankind  
 To be peopled !

That of my sorrows is the greatest,  
 That Adam shall (he that of earth was wrought)  
 My strong-establish'd seat possess,  
 And be his joy—and *we* this torture suffer,  
 Pain within this hell !

O that I had sway of hand,  
 And might one season out fare !  
 Bide one winter's space ! Then I with this host——  
 But around me lie iron bonds !  
 Presseth the fetter's link !—I am realmless !  
 Me so strongly hold hell-chains  
 Fast bound. Here is huge fire  
 Aboon and beneath ! aye saw I not  
 A loathlier landskip ; the flame ne'er fadeth  
 Hot over hell. Me hath the rings' clasp,  
 The hard-polish'd link from onward course disabled—  
 From progress barr'd ; my feet are bound !  
 Hands y-chained ! Of these hell-doors  
 The ways are lost, as with aught I cannot  
 From these jointed bonds !

Lie around me  
 Huge grindles<sup>2</sup> of hard iron,  
 Fixed hot ; with them God  
 Hath me fetter'd by the neck !

So wot I well, he my heart knew,  
 And wist eke this, the Lord of hosts,

<sup>1</sup> Lye renders this phrase *mordax vinculum*, and perhaps rightly.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Thorpe follows Lye in his construction of this passage,

Of these hell-doors are  
 The ways obstructed, so that with aught I cannot  
 From these limb-bonds escape.

That the ways are *open*, though lost to the fettered angel, is clear from what follows. I think too that *sua* is not rightly rendered.

<sup>3</sup> As far as we can judge from the drawing which accompanies the description, the *grindel* was a kind of heavy iron grating, which rather encumbered the prisoner by its weight, than fixed him in its grasp.

Mr. Thorpe renders *hate geslægene*, forg'd with heat.

Thæt sceol | de unc ad | áme<sup>1</sup>: yf | ele | gewurth | an  
 Ymb | thæt heof | on-ric | e : thær | íc ah | te min | ra han | da gewæld,<sup>2</sup>  
 A'c thol | iath wé | nú threa | on hel | le : thæt syn | don thys | tro and  
     hæt | o  
 Grim | me grund- | lease : haf | ath us god | sylfa  
 Forswap | en on | thas sweart | an mis | tas : swa | he us | ne mæg en | ige  
     syn | ne gestæl | an  
 Thæt we | him on | tham lan | de lath | gefrem | edon  
     He hæfth | us theah | thæs leoht | es bescyr | ede  
 Beworp | en on eal | ra wit | a mæs | te : ne mag | on we | thæs wrac | e  
     gefrem | man  
 Gelean | ian him | mid lath | es wiht | e : thæt | he us haf | ath thæs  
     leoht | es bescyr | ede  
 He hæfth | nu gemeár | cod . an | ne mid | dan-geard | : thær | he hæfth  
     món | geworht | ne  
 Æf | ter his ón | licnes | se : mid tham | he wil | e eft | geset | tan  
 Heof | ona ric | e . mid hlutt | rum sau | lum  
     Wé | thæs scul | on hycg | an georn | e  
 Thæt | we on ád | áme gif | we æf | re mæg | en : and on | his eaf | rum  
     swa sóm | e . ánd | an gebet | an  
 Onwend | an<sup>3</sup> him | thær wil | lan sín | es : gif | we hit mæg | en wih | te  
     athenc | an  
 Ne | gelyf | e<sup>4</sup> íc | me nu | . thæs leoh | tes fur | thor : thæs | the him  
     thenc | eth lang | e niót | an  
 Thæs eád | es mid | his eng | la cræf | te : ne mag | on we thæt | on al | dre  
     gewin | nan,  
 Thæt | we nuh | tiges God | es mod | onwæc | en : ut | on othwen | dan  
     hit | nú . mon | na bearn | um

<sup>1</sup> This passage, like many others which have to do with the dual number, is very obscure. I have construed, as if *unc Adame* were an idiom, similar to *wit Adam twa*, we two, Adam and I.—Cæd. fol. 222 [*Satan*, 411].

Mr. Thorpe considers *unc* to refer to the Deity and himself (*Satan*);

That should us, through Adam, evil befall, &c.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Thorpe here marks a hiatus of several lines. The MS. shows no erasure (though a drawing intervenes) and the sense appears continuous. The mention of Heaven brings before the fallen angel his present misery; they follow—hate against God, justified by a wretched sophistry—despair of success as against *him*—and the outpourings of envy and malice against his creature.

In comparing the Satans of Milton and Cædmon, we see at once the difference of their genius; the dramatic power, or (in German phrase) the *objectiveness* of the one, and the intense *subjectiveness* of the other. Milton's devil is an abstraction—a God; Cædmon's a real existence. Milton's is the nobler picture:

That, through me and Adam, evils must ensue,  
About that heaven's realm, where I had sway of hand !

But endure we now throes in hell ! darkness that is, and heat  
Grim and bottomless !—Us hath God self  
Swept into these swart mists, so of sin he may not us convict,  
That we gainst him, in that land, evil frame.

He hath us though of light bereft !—  
Hurl'd us to greatest tortures ! Nor may we for this vengeance frame,  
Or quit him aught of evil, for that of light he us bereft !

He hath now design'd a mid-earth, where he hath man y-wrought,  
After his likeness ; with whom he wills again to people  
Heaven's realm with shining souls.

This should we endeavour strongly,  
That we on Adam (if e'er we may) and on his offspring too our hate  
may wreak—  
There pervert him in his will—if we may in ought devise it.  
Nor hope I now light further (so pleaseth him) long while t' enjoy,  
Or happiness with his angels' power. Nor may we this e'er gain,  
That we of mighty God the rage should weaken. Let us snatch it then  
from the sons of men,

Cædmon's the more natural, and if (as we are taught) man be but little lower  
than the angels—a *truer* portrait.

<sup>3</sup> Verbs which take the prefix *on* appear to be variously accented. They  
should be carefully watched.

<sup>4</sup> This passage seems a mere burst of despair. Mr. Thorpe, however,  
supposes it to relate generally to Adam, and that in the phrase, "*his* angels,"  
the pronoun refers to him, "who was created like the angels."

Now I have no confidence further, in this bright state, that which he seems long  
destined to enjoy.

That happiness with *his* angel's power.

Throughout this poem, Cædmon alludes to the "portion in light" which  
was once granted to the fallen angel.

"How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning."

Is. 14. 12.



Thæt heof|on-ric|e nu wé | hit hab|ban ne mot|on : gedon | thæt hie |  
 his hyl|do forlæt|en  
 Thæt hie | thæt onwend|on . thæt he | mid his word|e bebéad :  
 thon|ne weorth | he him wrath | ón mod|e  
 A'-hwet<sup>1</sup> | hie from | his hyldo : thon|ne scul|on hie | thas hel|le  
 sec|an  
 And | thas grim|man grund|as : thon|ne mot|on we | hie us | to  
 giong|rum hab|ban  
 Fir|a bearn|. on this|sum fæs|tun clom|me

Ongin|nath nu ymb|tha fyrd|e thenc|ean  
 Gif | íc sæn|egum thég|ne : theó|den-mad|mas  
 Gear|a forgeaf|e : then|den wé on | than gód|an ric|e  
 Gesæl|ige sæt|on : and hæf|don ur|e set|la gewéald|  
 Thon|ne he | me na | on leof|ran tid : lean|um ne meah|te  
 Min|e gif|e gyl|dan : gif | his<sup>2</sup> gien | wolde  
 Min|ra theg|na hwilc : gethaf|a wurth|an  
 Thæt | he úp | heonon : ut|e miht|e  
 Cum|an thurh | thas clus|tro : and hæf|de cræft | mid him  
 Thæt | he mid feth|er-hóm|an : fleog|an meah|te  
 Wind|an on wolc|ne : thær | geworht | stond|ath  
 A'd|am and éu|e : on eorth|-rice|  
 Mid wel|an bewun|den : and we | synd aworp|ene hid|er  
 On | thas deop|an dal|o

Nu | hie driht|ne synt|  
 Wurth|ran mic|le : and mótt|on him thon|e wél|an ág|an  
 The wé | on heof|on-ric|e : hab|ban sceol|don  
 Ríc|e mid riht|e<sup>3</sup> : ís | se ræd | gescyr|ed  
 Mon|na cyn|ne : thæt | me ís|ón mod|e min|um<sup>4</sup> swa sar|  
 On min|um hyg|e hreow|eth : thæt hie | heof|on-ric|e  
 Ag|an to al|dre

Gif | hit eow|er sæn|ig mæg|e  
 Gewend|an mid wiht|e : thæt | hie word | God|es  
 Lar|e forlæt|en : són|a hie him | the lath|ran beoth|  
 Gif | hie brec|ath his | gebód|scipe : thon|ne he him | abolgen  
 wurth|eth

<sup>1</sup> *Hwettan* and *ahwettan* mean to sharpen, to whet, to excite, to inflame. The meaning given to it in the text agrees well enough with the context, but has no authority to support it.

<sup>2</sup> *á*, instead of a prefix, *may* be the adverb. If so, the passage should be rendered,

*Áge* drive them from his favour, &c.

<sup>3</sup> *his* appears to be the genitive case after *gethafa*. Mr. Thorpe seems to look upon *gien* as a preposition governing it,

If in return for it he would  
 (Any of my followers) be my supporter, &c.

That heaven's realm, now *we* it may not have—cause that they his favour  
lose—

That they pervert, what he by his word hath bidden. Then gainst them  
wrath at heart he 'll be,

Will drive them from his favour—then must they seek this hell,  
And these grim gulfs; then mote we them for subjects have—  
The sons of men—in this fast bondage.

Begin ye now about this raid to think,

If I to any thane lordly treasures

Gave of yore, (while we in that good realm

Sat happy, and o'er our seats had sway,)

Then he, in happier hour, might not with meed

My gift repay,—if indeed of this

Any one of my thanes would be th' abettor—

That upward hence he would outfare,

Through these barriers, and should have strength within him,

That he with feathery mantle might flee,

And wind him through the welkin, where stand y-fashion'd

Adam and Eve, upon earth's realm,

With weal wound round! and *we* are hither hurl'd

Into these deep gulfs!

Now they to Lord

Are dearer far, and mote that weal possess,

Which *we* in heaven's realm should have;

That realm with right is the lot assigned

To mankind! This lies on my mind so sore!

Rueth me in my heart, that *they* heaven's realm

Possess for ever!

If any of you may

This change with aught, that they God's word

And lore desert, soon they to him the more loath'd will be.

If they break his command,—then he gainst them enrag'd becomes,

This passage is rather involved; the meaning seems to be, "if any one owe me a favour, now is the time to repay it; if indeed any will pass these barriers, and should be strong enough to reach the earth." The contrast, so abruptly introduced, at the end of the passage, appears to me extremely beautiful.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Thorpe joins this section with the last sentence,

Our realm by right; this council is decreed

For mankind.

<sup>4</sup> Mr. Thorpe transposes these words—that me is on minum mode swa sar.  
[The MS. has marks for such transposition.—W. W. S.]

Sith | than bith hím | se wel | a onwend | ed : and wyrth | him wit | e  
 gegear | wod  
 Súm heard | harm | -scearu

Hyc | gath his eal | le  
 Hú | ge hi | beswic | en : sith | than íc | me fest | e mæg |  
 Res | tan on this | sum rac | entum : gif hím | thæt ric | e los | ath  
 Se | the thæt | gelæs | teth : him | bith lean | gearo  
 Æf | ter to al | dre : thæs | we her-in | ne | mag | on  
 On thys | sum fyr | e forth : frem | ena | gewin | nan  
 Sit | tan læt | e íc hin | e with | me sylf | ne

Here the manuscript has lost a leaf. It appears the offer has been accepted, and the fiend is preparing for his journey. The following extract deserves notice, as it contains rather a striking example of that peculiar character-

Angan | hin | e tha gyr | wan : god | es ánd | saca  
 Fús | on fræt | wum : hæf | de fæcne hyg | e  
 Hæl | eth-helm | on heaf | od aset | te : and thón | e fúll heárd | e gebánd  
 Spenn | mid spáng | um : wist | e him spræc | a fêl | a  
 Wor | a word | a

Wand | him up thán | on  
 Hwearf | him thurh | tha hell | -dora : hæf | de hyg | e strang | ne  
 Leólc<sup>1</sup> | on lyf | te : lath | wende mód | <sup>a</sup>

Swáng | thæt fy'r | on twá | : feónd | es cræf | te  
 Wol | de deár | nunga : driht | nes geong | ran  
 Mid mán | -dædum | : ménn | beswíc | an  
 Forlæd | an and | forlæ'r | an : that | hie wur | don láth | god | e

He | tha geférd | e : thurh feond | es cræft |  
 Oth | thæt he ád | ám : on eorth | -rice |  
 God | es hánd | -gescéaft : gear | one fúnd | e  
 Wís | lice | gewórh | t : and | his wíf | sómed

The *Temptation* is much too long for insertion ; we will.

Driht | en send | e  
 Regn | from rod | erum : and | eac rum | e lét |

<sup>1</sup> This is a very curious contraction for *leolio* ; if indeed the omission of the vowel be not a mere clerical blunder. [Not so; *leólc* is "flew," pt. t. of *lær* : see Græin. Lye's explanation has been exploded.—W. W. S.]

Sithen will be their weal all chang'd, and for them punishment pre-  
par'd,  
Some dread torture-portion.

Think all of this—

How them ye may beguile ; sithen I fast may rest me  
In these fetters—if to *them* that realm be lost.  
He who this performs—for him a meed's prepared  
For ever after, (as far as we herein,  
—Henceforth in this fire—of good may win)  
Him will I let sit, by myself!

istic of Anglo-Saxon verse, to which Conybeare has given  
the name of *parallelism*. The boldness and the wickedness  
of the attempt is dwelt upon in no less than four successive  
passages.

Gan him then prepare God's adversary,  
Quick with his attire—mind of fraud had he.  
Hero's helm on head he set, and it full hard y-bound,  
And lac'd with clasps—wist he of speeches fele,  
Of wary words.

Sprang he up thence,  
And shot him through hell-doors ; heart strong had he,  
Lion-like aloft—a mind of hate.  
Smote he that fire in two, with fiendish strength—  
Covertly would he, with ill-practise,  
The Lord's lieges, men beguile,  
Mislead and lure astray, that they might be loathed of God.

He then journeyed with fiendish strength,  
Until he Adam, upon earth's realm,  
(God's handywork !) ready found,  
With wisdom fashioned, and his wife with him, &c.

therefore, finish our notice of Cædmon with his description  
of the Deluge [l. 1371].

The Lord sent  
Rain from the sky ; and eke, far and wide,

<sup>2</sup> *Mod* is here clearly neuter. Sometimes it is masculine. See Cædmon,  
fol. 18.

Wil|le-burn|an : on wor|uld thring|an  
Of sæd|ra gehwær|e

ég|or-stréam|as  
Sweart|e swóg|an : sæ's | úp | stigon  
Of|er stæth|-weallas

Strang | wæs and reth|e  
Se|the wæt|rum weold| : wreah | and theah|te  
Mán|fæhthu<sup>2</sup> bearn| : mid|dan-geard|es

Won|nan wág|e : wer|a éth|el-lánd  
Hóf | her|gode : hyg|e teon|an<sup>5</sup> wræc  
Met|od on mon|num : mer|e swith|e grap|  
On fæg|e folc|

Feo|wertig dag|a  
Niht|a oth|er swile| : nith | wæs réth|e  
Wæll|-grim wer|um : wul|dor-cyn|inges  
Yth|a wræc|on : ár|leasra feorh|  
Of flæsc|-homan|<sup>7</sup>

Flod | ealle wreah|  
Hreoh | under heof|onum : húa|-beorgas|  
Geond aid|ne grund| : and | on sund | áhóf|  
Earc|e from eorth|an : and | tha sêth|elo mfd|  
Tha seg|nade|<sup>6</sup> : sel|fa drih|ten  
Scyp|pend us|ser : tha | he that scip | beleac|  
Sith|than wfd|e rád| : wolc|num un|der  
Of|er hol|mes hrincg| : hof|sel|este

Fór | mid fearm|e : fæ'r|e ne mos|ton  
Wæg|-lithend|um : wæt|res brog|an

<sup>1</sup> *Burna* A. S. a stream, a bourn.

My little boat can safely pass the per'lous bourn.

*Spenser, F. Q. 3. 6. 10.*

And every bosky bourn.

*Comus, 313.*

<sup>2</sup> *Swæg-an* A. S. to murmur, to give a hollow sound, to *sough*.

A noise like that of a great *soughing* wind.

*Hist. Roy. Soc. see Todd.*

*Sough*, as a substantive, is still common in the north of England. It is found in Chaucer, Gower, and Ben Jonson.

<sup>3</sup> It would seem, there are two forms of this substantive, *fæht* and *fæhtu*.

<sup>4</sup> See p. 331, n. 4.

<sup>5</sup> Lye construes thus "animi molestiam (propter offensas) ultus est."

<sup>6</sup> See p. 359, n. 8.

<sup>7</sup> We still use the phrase to be *avenued of*, and in the North to be *wroken of*.

Let the welling bourns<sup>1</sup> on the world pour,  
From every vein.

Ocean's streams,  
Black they soughed; <sup>2</sup> seas uprose  
Over the strand-walls.

Strong was he and fierce,  
That wielded the waters; he cover'd and o'erwhelm'd  
The hate-brooding children of this mid-earth.

With the wan<sup>4</sup> wave man's mother-land  
And mansion he harried; the heart's sins wreak'd  
The Maker on men; ocean laid strong gripe  
On the fey<sup>6</sup> folk.

Forty days—  
Nights other forty too—his rage was fierce,  
Slaughter-grim against men. The King of glory's  
Billows wreak'd the life of the wicked  
On the mantle of flesh.

Flood cover'd all  
(Dread under heaven) the high hills  
Through the wide world; and afloat upheav'd,  
The ark from earth, and the nobles therewith,  
Whom sained the Lord himself,  
Our Maker! when he that ship lock'd fast.  
Sithen wide it rode, under the welkin,  
O'er the ocean's round—that house most blessed!

It went with its freight! To the ark must not come  
—Wave o'erriding—the water's terrors!

I have translated accordingly, though the common idiom in A. S. is *wræcam on*.  
Mr. Thorpe turns the passage differently;

the King of Glory's  
Waves drove the lives of the impious  
From their carcases.

I do not however recollect ever meeting with the verb in the sense here given to it.

<sup>6</sup> Lye renders *segnian* by *signare*, *obsignare*. It is the Flemish *segenen* and Dutch *segenen*, and in its primary sense meant to *mark* or *consecrate by a sign* (as the cross), and secondarily to *bless*. It is still retained in the Northern phrase, "God *saine* you." Scott has often used it.

*Sain* ye and save ye, and blithe mot ye be,  
For seldom they land, that go swimming with me.

*Monastery*, ch. 5.

There is no metrical point after *segnadc*.

Hæs | te hrín | on <sup>1</sup> : ac hie | hal | ig God |  
 Fer | ede and ner | ede <sup>2</sup>

Fif | tena stod |  
 Deop | ofer dun | um : sæ | drenc | e-flod | <sup>3</sup>  
 Mon | nes el | na <sup>4</sup>

Thæt | is mæc | o wyrd | <sup>5</sup>  
 Tham | æt nieht | an : wæs nán | to gedál | e  
 Nym | the heo | wæs : áhaf | en on | tha he | an lyft |  
 Tha | se ég | or-her | e : eorth | an tud | dor  
 Eall | acweal | de : but | on thæt eac | e bórd |  
 Heold | heof | ona frea |

The extracts we have given are not perhaps those which would most strike the reader. The passages, in which Cædmon puts on all his sublimity, are unfortunately among the most difficult. These extracts, however, may serve, in some measure, to show the masterly manner in which he manages his numbers. His accent always falls in the right place, and the emphatic syllable is ever supported by a strong one. His rhythm changes with the thought,—now marching slowly with a stately theme, and now running off with all the joyousness of triumph, when his subject teems with gladness and exultation. There is reason to believe, that to these beauties our forefathers

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Thorpe translates

gushing streams might not  
 The wave-faring, horrors of the waters,  
 Furiously touch.

But I doubt if *hrinan* governs a dative.

<sup>2</sup> The proper mode of scanning this section is by no means clear. It would seem that a double rime was intended: if so, we must contract the verbs,

fer'de and ner'de

but if this were allowable how could the hearer distinguish between *ferede* and *ferde*? Was there a doubly accented rime?

Fer | ede | and ner | ede |,

or did the section elide the final vowel of *ferede*?

Fered' and nerede.

<sup>3</sup> Mr. Thorpe compounds *sæ-drence*; but, by so doing, he destroys the alliteration,

Deop ofer dunum : sæ-|drence flód |

The sea-rush they touch'd ; but them holy God  
Led and rescued !

Fifteen it stood  
Of man's ells, high o'er the downs,  
The sea—one drenching flood !

'Tis a mighty weird !  
From them at last, was none separate——  
Save them, was none on the high lift uprais'd !<sup>4</sup>  
Then the sea-host earth's offspring  
All o'erwhelmed ; but that ark-hull  
Heaven's Lord upheld.

were deeply sensitive ; and that Cædmon owed to them no small portion of his popularity. In these respects, he has no superior, in the whole range of our literature, and perhaps but *one* equal.

From the middle of the seventh century, when Cædmon wrote, we have no poem, whose date is ascertained, for more than two hundred years. In the latter half of the ninth century Alfred translated, or rather paraphrased the *Metres* of Boethius. The MS. which contained these translations has perished ; but a copy had been taken by Junius, and is now in the Bodleian Library. This copy is of course the best authority we can now refer to, and it

<sup>4</sup> *Ell* A. S. an *ell*, or length of a man's fore-arm from the *el*-bow to the wrist.

<sup>5</sup> *Wyrd* A. S. a fate, a destiny, a *weird*.

<sup>6</sup> I can only construe this passage on the hypothesis that *nan* is understood after *wæs*. Mr. Thorpe renders it differently :

That was an awful fate,  
From what at last was naught exempt  
Unless 'twere raised in the high air ;

but as *wyrd* is feminine, this construction would require *there* instead of *tham*.

It may be observed that Mr. Thorpe has *twice corrected* his MS. in this short passage—once that he may begin the section with an alliterative syllable, and in a second place, that he may have the two alliterative syllables in the same section.

Tham at niehstan wæs : nan to gedale  
Nymthe heo wæs ahafen : on tha hean lyft.



is much to be regretted that, in a late edition, it has been estimated so lightly. Mr. Fox considers Junius as already "convicted of faulty punctuation" in his transcript of *Cædmon*,<sup>1</sup> and he has therefore remodelled the versification, according to his own notions. The reader, who may question the correctness of his text, is "referred to Rawlinson's edition," and (as the transcript of Junius was not at hand) to that edition I have had recourse.

That the reader may judge in what manner Alfred has paraphrased his author, we will first give the Metre, as Boethius wrote it :

Vela Neritii ducis	Solis edita semine,
Et vagas pelago rates	Miscet hospitibus novis
Eurus appulit insulæ,	Tacta carmine pocula ;
Pulchra qua residens dea,	Quos ut in varios modos

Hit | gessæl | de gio | : on sum | e tid | e  
 thæt Au | lixes | : un | der hæf | de  
 thæm Ca | sere | : cyn | e-ric | u twa |  
 He | wæs Thrac | ia<sup>2</sup> : thiod | a al | dor  
 and Re | tie<sup>4</sup> : ric | es hird | e<sup>5</sup>  
 Wæs | his frea | -Drihtnes : folc | -cuth nam | a  
 Ag | amem | non : se eal | les weold |  
 Crec | a ric | es  
 Cuth | wæs wid | e  
 Thæt on | tha tid | e : Tro | ian | a gewin |  
 Wearth | under wolc | num  
 For wig | es heard |<sup>6</sup>  
 Crec | a driht | en : camp | sted sec | an  
 Au | lixes mid | : an | hund scip | a  
 Læd | de ofer lag | u-stream |  
 Sæt long | e thær |  
 Tyn | winter<sup>7</sup> full | : the | sio tid | gelomp |

<sup>1</sup> A note directs us to the preface of Mr. Thorpe's *Cædmon*, page xiv.

<sup>2</sup> *Aulixes*, that is *Ulixes*, or *Ulysses*. There are reasons for believing that in some of the Anglo-Saxon dialects, *x* was pronounced merely as a sibilant aspirate. Archbishop Cæna in his riming hexameters makes *is* rime to *ix*.

Vivendo felix, Christo laurate triumphis  
 Vita tuis seculo specimen charissime celo,  
 Justitiæ cultor, verus pietatis amator, &c.

<sup>3</sup> No metrical point.

<sup>4</sup> No metrical point—Ithaca was called *Neritia* from the mountain *Neritus*.

Vertit herbi potens manus,	Et nihil manet integrum,
Hunc apri facies tegit ;	Voce corpore perditis ;
Ille Marmaricus leo	Sola mens stabilis : super
Dente creacit et unguibus ;	Monstra, quæ patitur, gemit.
Hic, lupis super additus,	O levem nimium manum,
Flere dum parat, ululat ;	Nec potentia gramina,
Olle, tigris ut Indica,	Membra quæ valeant licet
Tecta mitis obambulat.	Corda vertere non valent.
Sed licet variis malis	Intus est hominum vigor,
Numen Arcadis alitis	Arce conditus abditâ ;
Obsitum miserans ducem,	Hæc venena potentius
Peste solverit hospitibus.	Detrahunt hominem sibi,
Jam tamen mala remiges	Dira quæ penitus meant,
Ore pocula traxerant ;	Nec nocentia corpori
Jam sues Cerealia	Mentis ulcere sæviunt.
Glande pabula verterant ;	<i>B. 4. Metr. 3.</i>

[Here follows Alfred's translation, Met. xxvi. l. 4.]

It happ'd of yore, upon a time,  
That Aulixes<sup>2</sup> had under  
The Kaiser kingdoms two ;  
He was elder of the Thrakia-clans,  
And of Retia's realm the leader.  
His sovereign Lord's far-known name  
Was Agamemnon ; he wielded all  
The Creeks' [*i.e.* Greeks'] realm.

Known was it widely,  
That, on that tide, the Trojan war  
Happ'd under welkin.

Forth went the war-leader—  
The Creeks' Lord—battle-stead to seek ;  
Aulixes with him a hundred ships  
Led o'er the sea-stream.

He sat long there—  
Ten winters full. When the time fell,

---

and thence doubtless Alfred got his Retie. Why he makes Ulysses king of Thrakia it would be difficult to say.

<sup>1</sup> Perhaps these two lines would be better scanned as one line :—

He | was Thra|cia thiod|a al|dor : and Re|tie-ri|ces hird|e.

<sup>2</sup> This is one of those substantives which have a duplicate in *e*. [No ; heard is an adjective. The sense is "strong in war."—W. W. S.]

<sup>3</sup> In Anglo-Saxon, nouns of number were accented more strongly than the substantive. Hence the accentuation of our modern compounds, twelve|month  
seu|night, &c.

Thæt hi | thæt ric | e : geræht | hæf | don  
 Deor | e gecep | te : Drih | ten Crec | a  
 Tro | ia-burh | : til | um gesith | um

Tha | tha<sup>1</sup> Aulix | es : leaf | e hæf | de  
 Thrac | ia-cyn | ing : thæt | he thon | an mos | te  
 He | let him | behind | an : hyrnd<sup>2</sup> | e ciol | as  
 Nig | on and | <sup>3</sup> hund-nig | ontig : Næn | igne<sup>4</sup> thou | an  
 Mer | e-heng | esta : ma | thonne æn | ne  
 Fer | ede on fif | el<sup>5</sup> -stream : fam | ig<sup>6</sup> bord | on  
 Thrie | rethre ceol : thæt | bith thæt mæst | e  
 Crec | isra scip | a

Tha | wearth ceald | wede  
 Stearc | storm | a gelac : stun | ede | sio brun | e  
 Yth | with oth | re : ut | feor adraf |  
 On wend | elsæ : wig | endra<sup>7</sup> scol | a  
 Up on | thæt ig | land : thær Ap | ollin | es  
 Doh | tor wun | ode : dæg | -rimes worn |

Wæs | se Ap | ollin | us : æth | eles cyn | nes  
 Iob | es eaf | ora : se | wæs gio | <sup>10</sup> cyning  
 Se lic | ette | : lit | lum and mic | lum  
 Gum | ena | gehwylc | um : thæt | he God<sup>11</sup> | wære  
 Hehst | and halg | ost : swa | se hlaf | ord tha |  
 Thæt dys | ige folc : on | gedwol | an læd | de  
 Oth | thæt hym | gelyf | de : leod | a un | rim  
 For | thæm he wæs | . mid riht | e : ric | es hyrd | e  
 Heor | a cyn | e-cyn | nes

Cuth | is wid | e  
 Thæt on | tha tid | e : theod | a æghwile  
 Hæf | don heor | a hlaf | ord : for thon | e hehs | tan God |  
 And weorth | odon : swa | swa wul | dres cyn | ing  
 Gif | he to | thæm ric | e : wæs | on riht | e bor | en

<sup>1</sup> *Thu* in Rawlinson's edition. [And *thu* in Junius.—W. W. S.]

<sup>2</sup> It would seem that the prefix *hund* did not take the accent, *hund-ec* / *ontig*, *hund-eah* / *tatig*, &c.

<sup>3</sup> Mr. Fox, in this place, changes *nænigne* into *nænige*; but with an honesty, not common among Anglo-Saxon editors, gives his reader fair warning. He has mistaken *ferede*, the past tense of *ferian*, for *ferde*, the past tense of *feran*. Rawlinson points the passage thus—*Nænigne* thonan mere hengesta ma . thonne ænne ferede. [So in Junius' transcript.—W. W. S.]

<sup>4</sup> There have been several attempts to explain this phrase; but none, I think, satisfactory. [See p. 378, n. 3.]

<sup>5</sup> It would seem, from this line, that *ceol* is neuter.

<sup>6</sup> Alfred's interest in every thing that related to his marine is well known.

That they that realm had taken,  
Dearly won the Creeks' Lord  
Troya-burgh, with his good comrades.

Then, when Anlixes had leave,  
(Thrakia's king) that he might thence—  
He left behind him horned keels,  
Nine and ninety. From thence no more  
Of the sea-stallions, than one, he led  
On Fifel-stream—with foamy sides,  
A three-bank'd keel—that is the greatest<sup>7</sup>  
Of Creekish ships.

Then was cold weather—  
Storms a huge plenty; dash'd the brown wave  
One gainst other, and out far drave,  
On Wendel-sea,<sup>8</sup> the warrior-bands,  
Upon that island, where Apollin's  
Daughter wonn'd, days a number.

This Apollinus was of noble kin—  
Yob's<sup>9</sup> son. *He* was king of yore,  
He pretended to small and great,  
(To every man) that he was God  
Highest and holiest. So this lord then  
That silly folk into error led,  
Till him believed, a host of people,  
For that he was, of right, the kingdom's leader—  
Of their kingly kin.

Known is it widely,  
That, on that tide, the nations each one  
Had their Lord for the highest God,  
And worship'd him, like as the Glory-king,  
If he to the realm of right was born;

He greatly improved upon the Danish and Friesish ships, before his time the best in Europe.

<sup>7</sup> That is, the Mediterranean.

<sup>8</sup> There are three genitives plural, in this metre, which end in *ra-wigendra*, *thegnra*, and *wildra*; *wildra* also is found in Cædmon. [See p. 353, n. 9.]

<sup>9</sup> The Anglo-Saxons had no *v*. [*Iob* is for *Jove*.]

<sup>10</sup> *Gio* is certainly the alliterative syllable of this section. In Anglo-Saxon we often find the adverb taking one of the strongest accents in the sentence. We have still some traces of this usage in our language, as in our mode of accenting the modern compound *welcome*.

<sup>11</sup> *Good* in the MS. [Yes; Junius writes *good*.—W. W. S.]

Wæs | thæs Iob | es fæd | er : God <sup>1</sup> | eac swa he |  
 Sat | urnus thon | e : sund | -buend | e het | on  
 Hæl | etha bearn | : hæf | don tha mæg | tha  
 Ælc | ne sēf | ter oth | rum : for ec | ne God |

Sceol | de eac | we san : Ap | olin | es doh | tor  
 Dior | -boren | : dys | iges folc | es  
 Gum | -rinca gyd | en : cuth | e gald | ra fel | a  
 Drif | an dry cræftas : hio | gedwol | an fylg | de  
 Man | na swith | ost : man | egra theod | a  
 Cyn | inges doh | tor : sio Cir | ce wæs | <sup>5</sup>  
 Hat | en for her | igum <sup>6</sup> : hio | ric | sode  
 On | thæm ig | londe : the Au | lixes |  
 Cyn | ing Thra | cia <sup>7</sup> : com | ane to |  
 Ceol | e lith | an.

Cuth | wæs son | a  
 Eal | lre thær | e mæn | ige : the hir | e mid | wun | ode  
 Æth | eling | es sith : hio | mid un | gemet | e  
 Lis | sum luf | ode : lith - monna frea | <sup>8</sup>  
 And | he eac | swa sam | e : eal | le mæg | ne  
 Ef | ne swa swith | e : hi | on sēf | an luf | ode  
 Thæt | he to | his eard | e : æn | ige nys | te  
 Mod | es myn | lan : of | er mægth | giunge  
 Ac | he mid | thæm wif | e : wun | ode sith | than  
 Oth | thæt him | ne meah | te : mon | na æn | ig  
 Thegn | ra <sup>9</sup> sin | ra : thær | mid <sup>10</sup> | we san  
 Ac | hi for | thæm yrm | thum : eard | es lys | te <sup>11</sup>  
 Myn | ton for - læt | an : leof | ne hlaf | ord  
 Tha | ongun | non wer | can : wer | theoda spell |  
 Sæd | on thæt | hio sceol | de : mid hir | e scin | lace

<sup>1</sup> Here we have for the alliterative syllable[s] *Iob* and *God*, and a few couplets above *Iob* and *gio*. May we not infer that among the West-Sexes, *g* sometimes took the sound of *y*? *Gott* is still pronounced *Yott* in Hanover. We may note *Geoweortha* for *Jugurtha*, in Ælfred, tr. of Orosius, b. v. c. 7.

<sup>2</sup> That is, the sailors (the great astronomers of those days) called his star Saturnus.

<sup>3</sup> Mr. Fox construes thus :

Him Saturn the sea-dwellers  
 Call, even the children of men ; they esteemed their kinsmen  
 One after another as the eternal God.

But as *mægth* is feminine, this construction would require *ælce* instead of *ælne*.

<sup>4</sup> To *drice* a bargain, a trade, a craft, are still well-known idioms.

<sup>5</sup> Here is no metrical point.

<sup>6</sup> Mr. Fox construes thus :

The king's daughter was Circe  
 Called for her oppressions.

(This Yob's father was God eke as he ;  
 Saturnus him sea-dwellers call'd—  
 The sons of men <sup>2</sup>) : the nations had  
 Each one after other, for the eternal God ! <sup>3</sup>

Must also be Apollin's daughter  
 (As nobly born) the sylly folks—  
 The people's Goddess. She couth of many arts,  
 Charm-crafts to drive ; <sup>4</sup> error she followed  
 Of all people most, through many nations—  
 The king's daughter ! She was Circe hight  
 'Fore her shrines. She reigned  
 In that island, which Aulixes  
 (Thrakia's king) happ'd with one  
 Ship to sail to.

Known was soon

To all the menie, that with her wonn'd,  
 The Etheling's journey. She, without limit,  
 Passionately lov'd the seamen's lord ;  
 And he eke the same, with all his main  
 E'en as strongly, her lov'd in soul ;  
 That he tow'rd his land wist not any  
 Heart's affection, beyond that young maiden ;  
 But he with that woman sithen wonn'd,  
 Till there might not any of the men—  
 Thanes of his—there with him bide.  
 But they, for the yearnings of their country's love,  
 Minded to leave him their lief Lord.

Then gan to work the people spells ;  
 Said they, that she would, with her magic,

I doubt if this meaning can be given to the word *herigum*. Besides, how is the name *Circe* descriptive of an oppressor ?

<sup>1</sup> I suspect this is a mistake for *Thracia cyning*.

<sup>2</sup> I have construed this line, on the supposition that *frea* is a mistake for *frea*, the accusative.

<sup>3</sup> [So in MS. ; but read *thegna*.—W. W. S.]

<sup>4</sup> When a preposition follows the word it governs, it takes a stronger accent ; and when it immediately precedes the verb at the close of the sentence, its accent is generally the predominant one in the sentence. The former part of this rule may explain the accentuation of our modern compounds ; *thereby*], *thereto*], *heroby*], *heroin*], &c.

<sup>11</sup> Lye renders the passage in the same way. The construction requires that *lyst* should be feminine, which is rather doubtful. Perhaps it would be safer to construe thus :

But they for their wretchedness—for their country's love  
 Minded to leave, &c.

Beorn|as forbred|an : and | mid bal|o-cræf|tum  
 Wrath|um weorp|an : on wild|ra lic|  
 Cyn|inges thegn|as : cys|pan sith|than  
 And | mid rac|entan eac| : ræp|an mæn|igne  
 Sum|e hi | to wulf|um wurd|on : ne meah|ton thon|ne  
           word | forth bring|an

Ac | hio thrag|-mælum : thiot|on ongun|non  
 Sum|e wær|on eaf|oras : á | grym|eted|on  
 Thon|ne hi sar|es hwæt| : siof|ian sciol|don  
 Tha | the le|on wær|on : ongun|non lath|lice  
 Yr|renga ryn|a : thon|ne hi sceol|don<sup>1</sup>  
 Clip|ian | for corth|re : Cniht|as wurd|on  
 Eal|de ge giung|e : eall|e forhwerf|de  
 To sum|um dior|e : swelc|um he ær|or  
 On | his lif|-dagum| : gelic|ost wæs|  
 But|an tham cyn|inge : the | sio cwen | luf|ode  
 Nol|de thar|a oth|ra : æn|ig onbit|an  
 Men|niaces met|es : ac | hi ma | luf|edon  
 Deor|a droht|ath : swa | hit gedef|e ne wæs|  
 Næf|don hi mar|e : mon|num gelic|es  
 Eorth|-buend|um · thon|ne in|gethonc|  
 Hæf|don an|ra gehwile| : his ag|en Mod|  
 Thæt | wæs theah swith|e : sorg|um gebund|en  
 For | thæm earf|othum : the | him on|sæton.<sup>2</sup>

Hwæt | tha dys|egan men| : the thys|um dry|cræftum  
 Long<sup>3</sup> | lyf|don : leas|um spel|lum  
 Wis|son hwæth|re : thæt | thæt gewit|ne mæg|  
 Mod | onwend|an : mon|na æn|ig  
 Mid dry|cræftum| : theah | hio gedon | meahte  
 Thæt | tha lich|oman : lang|e thrag|e  
 Onwend | wurd|on.

Is | thæt wun|derlic  
 Mæg|en-cræft mic|el : mod|a gehwile|es  
 Of|er lich|oman : læn|ne and sæn|ne

Swylc|um and swylc|um : Thu | meaht sweet|ole | ongit|an  
 Thæt | thæs lich|oman : list|as and cræf|tas  
 Of|thæm Mod|e cum|ath : mon|na gehwyl|cum  
 Æn|lepra ælc| · thu | meaht eath|e ongit|an  
 Thæt te ma | dereth : mon|na gehwylc|um  
 Mod|es un|theaw : thon|ne met|trymnes  
 Læn|es lich|oman.

<sup>1</sup> Here is no alliteration.

<sup>2</sup> Here is no alliteration, unless we accent the prefix *on*. See p. 339. n.  
 [Ettmüller supplies *á*, i.e. ever, after *him*.—W. W. S.]

The men lay low, and with ill-crafts  
 Cruelly throw into beasts' shapes  
 The king's thanes—sithen fetter,  
 And eke with chains, bind many a one.  
 They, some like wolves became; ne might they then one  
     word forth bring;  
 But they at times to howl began.  
 Some were boars; aye they grunted,  
 When aught of sorrow they would bemoan.  
 They, that were lions, horribly gan  
 Angrily to roar, when they would  
 Call for the crew. The men became,  
 Old and young, all changed  
 To some beast, such as he erst  
 In his life-days likest was—  
 All but the king whom the queen lov'd.  
 Of the others, would not any eat  
 Of man's meat; but they more lov'd  
 The company of beasts—as was ill fitting.  
 Ne had they more of likeness to men,  
 That people earth, than the power of thought.  
 Each of them had his own mind,  
 But that was greatly sorrow-bound,  
 For the troubles, which them beset.

But then the foolish men, that in these charm-crafts  
 Long believed—in idle tales—  
 Knew, however, that no man may  
 The wit, or the mind change,  
 With charm-crafts; though she might cause  
 That their bodies, for a long throw,  
 Changed should be.

    'Tis wonderful—  
 The mickle power of might of each man's mind  
 Over the body weak and sluggish!

By such and such things, thou may'st plainly see  
 That the body's faculties and pow'rs  
 From the mind come, to every man—  
 Ilk one of them. Thou may'st readily see,  
 That more hurteth every man  
 The mind's ill habit, than the sickness  
 Of the frail body.

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<sup>2</sup> *Long* is, probably, a mistake for *longe*.



Ne | thearf leod | a nan |  
 Wen | an thær | e wyrd | e : thæt | thæt wer | i ge fæsc .  
 Thæt Mod <sup>1</sup> : mon | na sēn | i ges  
 Eal | lung a to | him : sē | fre mæg | on wen | dan <sup>2</sup>  
 Ac | tha un | theawas : sēl | es mod | es  
 And | thæt in | gethonc : sēl | es mon | nes  
 Thon | e lich | oman lit | : thid | er hit wil | e

Alfred's versification shows poorly indeed beside that of Cædmon. He seems to have had little more command over his rhythm, than some of our modern poets. The sectional pause (always a dangerous thing to meddle with) is often used by him, and seldom happily; and the management of his accents is such, as very rarely to assist his meaning.

But Alfred was something greater than a poet. Who can read these lines without emotion, when he remembers that the writer—while discharging his kingly duties as no other man discharged them—was daily sinking under a painful disease, that ended only with his life?

We must now pass to the days of Alfred's grandson. In the year 937, was fought the battle of Brunanburgh—a battle, that involved more important interests, than any that has ever yet been fought within the Island. It was indeed a battle between *races*: and had England failed, her name might have been lost for ever. The forces on either side were worthy of the stakes they

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Æth | elstan cing | <sup>3</sup> : cor | la drih | ten.

Beor | na beag | -gifa : and | his bro | thor eac |

<sup>1</sup> Here a section appears to be wanting. No metrical point.

<sup>2</sup> These two lines had better be read as one:—

Thæt Mod | mon | na sēn | i ges : eal | lung a to | him sē | fre mæg | onwend | an.

[Grein reads:—

Thæt *mod-gemynd monna*, &c.—W. W. S.]

<sup>3</sup> The Dunstan MS. Tib. A. vi; the Abingdon, Tib. B. i; and the Worcester MS. Tib. B. iv. I have taken copies from all these MSS., and also from the P. B. MS. in Benet Library. The Dunstan MS. appears to be by far the most correct transcript of the four.

<sup>4</sup> He has not, however, confined himself to his three authorities. Some

Nor needs any one  
 Look for this hap—that the wretched flesh  
 The mind of any man  
 Altogether to it e'er may turn ;  
 But the ill habits of ilk mind,  
 And the *thought* of each man,  
 The body leads thither it will.

played for. Round the banner of Athelstan were ranged one hundred thousand Englishmen, and before them was the whole power of Scotland, of Wales, of Cumberland, and of Galloway, led on by sixty thousand Northmen. The song, which celebrated the victory, is worthy of the effort that gained it.

This song is found in all the copies of the Chronicle, but with considerable variations. Price collated three of them,<sup>3</sup> and formed a text, so as best to suit the convenience of translation.<sup>4</sup> The result might have been foreseen, and is such as little encourages imitation. I shall rather give the text, as it is found in *one* of these copies—the Dunstan MS. Not a word need be altered, to form either good sense or good poetry.

As the metrical point in this MS. divides the couplets, I am of course answerable for the position of the middle pause. When it marks the final pause, it will be inserted, so as to render unnecessary a constant reference to the notes.

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Æthelstan king,<sup>7</sup> of earls the Lord,  
 Of barons the beigh<sup>8</sup>-giver, and his brother eke,

---

his readings are not to be found in any of the MSS. which I have seen ; nor can I tell whence he got them.

<sup>3</sup> A metrical point.

<sup>4</sup> This is the common form, which introduces the events of each year in our venerable Chronicle.

<sup>7</sup> The first begotten, and the lawful heir

Of *Edward king*, the third of that descent.

1 *H. VI.* 2. 5. 65.

<sup>8</sup> The *beigh* was a kind of armlet. "Broche and beighe" is a common alliteration in our old romances ; and the plural *beighe* is still used in Norfolk.

<sup>9</sup> signify any costly ornaments, as jewels, &c. See Forby's Vocabulary.

Ead | mund æth | eling : eal | dor lang | ne tîr |.

Geslóg | an æt sak | e : sweord | a ecg | gum.

Em | be brun | an-burh

Bórd | -weall cluf | an.

Heow | an heath | o lîn | a : hām | ora lāf | um.

Eaf | oran ead | weardes : swa him | geath | ele was |.

Fram cneo | -magum : that hie | æt cam | pe oft |.

With lath | ra gehwan | e : land | eal | godon.

Hord | and hām | as

Het | tend <sup>7</sup> crun | gon

Scot | ta leod | e : and scip | -flotan |.

Fæg | e <sup>8</sup> feol | lan : feld | den | nade.<sup>9</sup>

Sec | ga swat | e : sith | than sun | ne upp |.

On mor | gen-tîd | : mæc | e tun | gol.

Glad | ofer grun | das : god | es can | del beorht |.

Ec | es driht | nes <sup>13</sup> : that <sup>14</sup> seo æth | ele | geacraft |.

Sah | to set | le <sup>15</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Etheling* meant a prince in its *general* sense, and in its *particular*, an heir to royalty—apparent or presumptive.

<sup>2</sup> *Tîr* A.S. a train, a *tîre*;

Such one was wrath, the last of this ungodly *tîre*. *F. Q.* 1. 4. 35.

The construction of this passage has been already discussed, see p. 318, n. 3. [But A. S. *tîr* means glory, and has not at all the sense of *tîre*.—W. W. S.]

<sup>3</sup> *Sweorda ecgum*, with the edges of the swords; and in another part of the poem *sweordes ecgum*, with the edges of the sword. The A.S. sword was long, pointed, and two-edged. Hence the propriety of the phrase.

<sup>4</sup> *Lina* is clearly a mistake for *linda*, which is found in the other MSS. *Lind*, the linden tree, was (as Price has shown) the poetical name for the shield; as *æsc*, the ash, for the spear. The latter was long preserved in our literature:

Let me twine

Mine arms about that body, where against

My grained *ash* an hundred times hath broke.

*Cor.* 4. 5. 112.

<sup>5</sup> We meet very commonly, in A. S. poetry, with the phrases *eald laf*, *grfe laf*, *heatho laf*, *hamera laf*, &c., as expressions for the sword. Price always gives to *laf* its common meaning, and is followed, in so doing, by Mr. Thorpe and Mr. Kemble—the old *relic*, the *relic* of inheritance, the battle *relic*, the *relic* of the hammers, &c. But *laf*, in these cases, is clearly the Icelandic *lauf-i*, a sword, a glaive. We thus get phrases that have a meaning; the old *glaive*, the hereditary *glaive*, the battle-*glaive*, the *glaive* of the hammers—that is, as I take it, the well-tempered glaive. [But see p. 363, note 10.—W. W. S.]

<sup>6</sup> By my *fader kin*,

Your herte hongeth on a joly pin.

*Chau. Merchant's Tale*; *C. T.* 9389.

Edmund the etheling,<sup>1</sup> elders a long tire,<sup>2</sup>  
Slew in battle, with sword-edges,<sup>3</sup>  
Round Brunanburgh.

Shield-wall they chive,  
They hew'd battle-lindens,<sup>4</sup> with hammer-glaives,<sup>5</sup>  
The sons of Edward! As in them 'twas of birthright,  
From their father-kin,<sup>6</sup> that they in war oft,  
Against each foe, their land should save,  
Their wealth and homes.

The spoiler quail'd;  
The Scottish people, and the ship-crews  
Feymen<sup>7</sup> fell. The field stream'd  
With soldier-sweat,<sup>10</sup> sithen the sun on high,  
At morning-tide (the mighty star!<sup>11</sup>)  
Glided o'er earth, God's candle<sup>12</sup> bright,  
(The eternal Lord's!)—till this noble handywork  
Sank to its seat.

<sup>7</sup> This is a collective noun and therefore takes a plural verb, see p. 320. An ignorance of this principle has led Price into some very serious errors.

<sup>8</sup> *Fags* A.S. death-doomed, *fey*.

And through they dash'd, and hew'd, and smash'd,  
Till *fey men* died awa, man. Burns. *Sheriff Muir*, st. 2.

<sup>9</sup> The true meaning of this verb Price discovered in the Icelandic. His note is a happy piece of criticism.

<sup>10</sup> That is—with blood. Price however is mistaken, when he says the Anglo-Saxon poets never used *swat* in its ordinary sense; see Cædmon, fol. 24. It is not without reference to its old poetical meaning, that Shakespeare uses the word:

The honourable captain there  
Drops bloody *sweat* from his war-wearied limbs.  
1 *H. VI.* 4. 4. 17.

<sup>11</sup> So the moon is called by Shakespeare,

The moist *star*,  
Upon whose influence Neptune's empire stands.  
*Ham.* 1. 1. 118.

<sup>12</sup> So Cædmon calls the sun, *folca frith candel*—man's candle of life. The word was not rejected from our poetry till after the 16th century.

Night's *candles* are burnt out. *Rom. and Jul.* 3. 5. 9.

<sup>13</sup> A metrical point.

<sup>14</sup> The other MSS. have *oth*, until. I have seen the phrase *swa lange—that*, such time—until; but never before *siththan—that*. Price reads *oth—that*, but without authority.

<sup>15</sup> A metrical point.

Thær | læg secg | man | ig.  
 Gar | um forgrun | den<sup>1</sup> : gum | an north | erne |.  
 Of | er scyld | sceot | en : swyl | ce scyt | tisc eac |.  
 Wer | ig wig | ges sæd |<sup>2</sup>

West | -sexe forth |.  
 And | langne dæg | : eor | ed-cys | tum.  
 On last | leg | don : lath | um theod | um.  
 Heow | an her | e-flym | an : hīnd | an thearl | e.  
 Mec | um myl | en-scearp | um<sup>4</sup> : myrc | e ne wyrn | don.  
 Heard | es hand | -plegan : hæl | etha nan | um.  
 Thar | a the | mid an | lafe : of | er ear | -gebland.  
 On lid | es bos | me : land | gesoh | tan.  
 Fæg | e to | gefeoh | te<sup>5</sup>

Fif | e lag | on.  
 On | thæm camp | -stede : cin | ingas geong | e.  
 Sweord | um aswef | ede : swilc | e seof | one eac |.  
 Eorl | as an | lafes<sup>6</sup> : un | rīm herg | es.  
 Flot | tan and scot | ta<sup>7</sup>

Thær | geflym | ed wearth |.  
 North | manna breg | o : ned | e gebæ'd | ed.  
 To lid | es stef | ne<sup>8</sup> : lyt | le weor | ode.  
 Cread |<sup>9</sup> cneor | on flot : cing | út | gewát |.  
 On feal | one flód | : feorh | gener | ede |.  
 Swyl | ce thær eac | se fród | a : mid fleam | e cóm |.  
 On | his cyth | the north | : constantīn | us.  
 Hār | hil | derinc

<sup>1</sup> A metrical point.

<sup>2</sup> Price thus construes the passage,

There lay many a warrior  
 Strew'd by darts, northern *man*  
 Shot over the shield. So Scottish eke  
 Weary of war—

leaving the passage without further explanation. To support this construction we must suppose *guman* a nominative singular. Now the nouns of this declension *do* sometimes take an *n* in the nominative, see *Sarras*, Cæd. fol. 109. and *Deman*, Cæd. fol. 229. These instances are very rare; but Price has his version countenanced, in some measure, by Dr. Ingram's reading *guma northern*. If this be admitted, we might construe,

There lay many a soldier  
 By the darts brought low; the man of the North  
 Over shield shot; so Scotchman eke—  
 Weary, war-tired!

There lay many a soldier,  
By the darts brought low—Northern men,  
Over shield shot : so eke the Scotchman  
Weary, war-tired !

The West-Sexe then  
—The livelong day—in banded throngs,  
At foot<sup>3</sup> laid on the loathed people ;  
They hew'd down the fliers fast from behind  
With swords mill-sharpen'd. Nor did the Myrce grudge  
Any one of the heroes the hard hand-play—  
Of those, that with Anlaf o'er the tumbling sea,  
In the ship's bosom, sought the land  
Fey men for the fight.

Five lay  
On that war-stead—youthful kings,  
Sword-silenced. So also seven  
Earls of Anlaf ; and a host of the robber-band,  
Ship-men and Scots.

There was chased  
The Northman leader, force-driven  
To the ship's bow, with slender train ;  
Drove keel afloat—the king out-fled—  
On fallow flood, life he saved !  
So there eke the sage one in flight came  
Northward to his kith—Constantinus—  
Hoary warrior !

Price has more than once changed *swylce* for *swylc*. I cannot see either reason or motive for so doing.

This pause is marked with a metrical point in the MS

<sup>3</sup> Follow him *at foot*, tempt him with speed abroad. *Hamlet*, 4. 3. 56.

<sup>4</sup> A metrical point. *Mylen-scearp* is a very remarkable compound—if it be rightly construed, and I do not see how otherwise it can be rendered.

<sup>5</sup> A metrical point.

<sup>6</sup> A metrical point.

<sup>7</sup> Literally "Of the fleet and of the Scots."

<sup>8</sup> Price first settled the meaning of this word.

<sup>9</sup> I have followed Price, who considers *cread* as the past tense of a verb *cread-an*, to press forward, to crowd. It should be observed, however, that in all the Old English examples which he quotes, this verb to *crowd* occurs as an active verb, never as a neuter one.

Hrem|an ne thórf|te  
 Mec|ca geman|an : her | wæs his mag|a sceard<sup>1</sup>.  
 Freun|da gefyl|led : on folc|-stede|.   
 Forsleg|en sēt sēc|e : and | his sun|u forlet|.   
 On wæl|-stowe<sup>2</sup> : wund|um forgrund|en.  
 Geong|ne sēt guth|e

Gylp|an ne thorf|te.  
 Beorn | bland|en-fex<sup>3</sup> : bill|-geslyht|es.  
 Eald | in|witta : ne an|laf<sup>4</sup> the|ma|.   
 Mid heor|a her|e-laf|um : hlih|han ne thorf|tan.  
 Thæt | hie bead|o-weorc|a : bet|eran wurd|an.  
 On camp|-stede : cum|bol-gehnas|tes.  
 Gár|-mittung|e : gum|ena | gemót|es.  
 Wæp|en-gewrix|les : thæs |<sup>7</sup> hie on wæl|-felda.  
 With ead|weardes<sup>8</sup> : eaf|oran pleg|odon.

Gewit|an him | tha north|men : nægl|ed<sup>9</sup> cnear|rum  
 Dreor|ig dar|otha láf| : on dyng|es<sup>10</sup> mer|e.  
 Of|er deop|-wæter : dyf|len sec|ean.  
 Eft | ír|a land : æw|isc-mod|e.  
 Swilc|e tha | gebroth|or : beg|en sēt som|ne.  
 Cing | and æth|eling : cyth|the soh|tan.  
 West|-seaxna land : wig|ges hrem|ige.

Let|an him | behind|an : hraw | bryt|tigan.  
 Sal|owig-pád|an<sup>12</sup> thon|e sweart|an hræfn|.

<sup>1</sup> Price's attempt to render this passage is an obvious failure. *Sceard* is clearly the Icelandic *skard*, a cutting off, a loss. In that dialect they have a compound *frænd-skard*, a loss of friends, which is almost the expression in the text, *freonda sceard*.

<sup>2</sup> A metrical point.

<sup>3</sup> A metrical point.

<sup>4</sup> How could Price make the singular noun *Anlaf* agree with the plural verb *thorftan*?

<sup>5</sup> *That* was used in the sense of, *for that, because*, till the middle of the 17th century. The *Paradise Lost* may afford us examples, as well as our beautiful *Liturgy*.

<sup>6</sup> Price thus renders the passage,

At the conflict of banners,  
 The meeting of spears, the assembly of men,  
 The interchange of weapons.

I suspect however that the poet intended to mark out the progress of the fight from the distant skirmish to the *mêlée*. I have doubts if *cumbol-gehnas* be rightly translated by either of us. One of Dr. Ingram's MSS. reads *gehas*—but this helps us little, for it does not occur elsewhere. *Garmittunge* is clearly the flight of darts or javelins—for *gar* meant a missile, not a spear. *Wepa-gewrixles* seems to be the interchange of weapons, or the fight hand to hand.

Needed not to boast  
Of the sword-greeting ! Here was loss of kin—  
Of friends hewn down, on the crowded field  
Slain at the fight. And his son he left  
On the slaughter-place, with wounds laid low,  
Though young in war.

Needed not to vaunt  
Of the bills slaughter, the grey-hair'd Baron,  
(The treachour old,) nor Anlaf more,  
With their army-wrecks, needed not to laugh,  
That <sup>8</sup> they were the better in works of war  
On battle-stead—in the banner-strife—  
The javelin-mingle <sup>9</sup>—the soldiers' close—  
The weapon-barter—since they play'd  
On slaughter-field, with Edward's sons !

Gan then the Northmen, in their nailed barks,  
(The darts' sad leavings, on the noisy sea :)  
Over deep water Dyflen to seek—  
The land of the Ire <sup>11</sup> once more—shame-hearted !  
So the brothers, both at once  
(King and etheling,) sought their kith,—  
The land of the West-Sexe—in the fight exulting !

Left they behind them (the carcase to share)  
Him of the fallow <sup>12</sup> coat—the swart raven

<sup>7</sup> Price reads *thes the*, and construes thus,

“Of that which they on the slaughter-field,” &c.

but *thes*, and *thes the*, are both of them mere conjunctions.

<sup>8</sup> A metrical point.

<sup>9</sup> Price gives us *nægledon*, without authority from either of his three MSS. ; unless the reading of the inaccurate Worcester MS. be considered such—*dægled ongarum*. Dr. Ingram however has found *nægledon* in some of his MSS.

<sup>10</sup> The Worcester MS. has *dyniges*, but I never met with either *dyng* or *dynig* elsewhere. With *darotha laf*, compare *ythlaf*, Exod. 585.

<sup>11</sup> That is Ire-land. *Dyflen* is Dublin, where Anlaf was then reigning.

<sup>12</sup> From a passage in *Beowulf*, Mr. Kemble was led to offer a very ingenious, and I think the true explanation of this phrase. One of the reasons, however, which his friend Mr. Thorpe gives for adopting it—viz. that *padan* would hardly be used twice together with the same meaning—is more questionable. I have little doubt that *haso-padan* is a compound of precisely the same kind as *salowig-padan*.

The Anglo-Saxons seem to have used *sallow* in the sense of dusky. The raven is called *sallow* both by *Cædmon* and the author of *Judith*.

Ac him fleah on laste  
Earn ætes georn : urig fethera



Hyrn|ed-neb|ban : and thon|e<sup>1</sup> has|o-pad|an.  
 Earn|æf|tan hwít|<sup>2</sup> : æs|es brúc|an.  
 Græd|igne guth|-hafoc : and|thæt græg|e deor|.  
 Wulf|on weal|de<sup>4</sup>

Ne|wearth wæl|máre.

On|thys<sup>5</sup> eg|lande : æf|re gyt|a.  
 Folc|es afyl|led : befor|an thys|sum.  
 Sweord|es ecg|un : thæs|the us secg|eath<sup>6</sup> béc|.  
 Eald|e uth|witan : syth|than east|an hid|er.  
 Eng|le and sex|an : upp|becom|an.  
 Of|er brad|e brim|u : bryt|ene soht|an  
 Wlanc|e wig|-smithas : weal|as of|ercom|an  
 Eorl|as ar|hwa<sup>7</sup>te : eard|begeat|on.

Anglo-Saxon rhythm may, in some measure, be considered as a *genus*, containing only one *species*. These specimens have therefore been ranged according to their date. But the reader must not conclude that it had no *varieties*. We have already seen how Cædmon lengthens his rhythm, when he thinks the dignity of his subject requires greater pomp of language. The fervour and energy of lyrical poetry demanded a quicker and more marked recurrence of the accent; and in poems of this class, the *abrupt* sections greatly outnumbered those which began with an unaccented syllable—sometimes in the proportion of ten or fifteen to one. The

Salowig pada : sang hilde leoth  
 Hyrned nebba.

*Judith*, 209.

But on their footsteps flew  
 The ern greedy for its prey, with hoary feathers;  
 He of the fallow coat sang the battle-song—  
 The bird with horned nib!

That is, the eagle followed, and the raven croaked. Price applied the phrase *salowig pada* in the last extract, to the eagle; and, if we may judge from his mode of pointing the passage, so does Mr. Thorpe.

<sup>1</sup> *Haso* seems to have been a mixture of white with some darker colour. Cædmon used it in describing the culver or wood-pigeon.

<sup>2</sup> The sea-eagle. It would seem, from this line, that *cara* was sometimes used as a neuter noun.

<sup>3</sup> A metrical point.

<sup>4</sup> A metrical point.

<sup>5</sup> The Abingdon MS. agrees here with the text. The Worcester MS. reads "on thisne! iglande." In Cædmon we sometimes find this pronoun without inflexion, as in the text. See Cædmon, fol. 19.

<sup>6</sup> Price thus renders the passage,

With horned nib; and him of the grizzled coat—  
 The ern<sup>2</sup> white-plumaged behind, his prey to gorge;  
 The greedy war-hawk; and the grey beast,  
 The wolf of the weald.

Was no greater carnage  
 Ever yet, within the island,  
 (Before this) of men fell'd  
 By the sword-edges, (as the books tell us—  
 The writers old) since from the east hither,  
 Up came Engle and Sexe,<sup>7</sup>  
 And, o'er the broad seas, sought Britain;  
 And mighty war-smiths<sup>8</sup> the Waels o'ercame;  
 And earls, after honour keen, gat the land.

sections 1 and 2 of two accents, were those most frequently used—indeed, so frequently as sometimes to form two-thirds of the whole. They were mostly lengthened, and sometimes doubly lengthened.

I have elsewhere<sup>10</sup> hazarded an opinion, that these short, abrupt, and forcible rhythms were the earliest that were known to our language. They are such as would naturally be prompted by excited feeling, and are well fitted for those lyrical outpourings, which form the earliest poetry of all languages.<sup>11</sup>

In the longer rhythms, alliteration appears something in-

---

Of that, that say to us in books  
 Old historians.

Now in the first place, *bec* is the nominative plural; and secondly, the section *thes the us secgeath bec*, is very commonly found *by itself*, in Anglo-Saxon poems. There can be little doubt, that *uth witan* is a nominative, in *apposition* with *bec*.

*Thes the* too is a mere conjunction.

<sup>7</sup> *Sexen* and *Sexe* are the real names of that energetic race, to whom England owes one-third of its population. Why must we go to France for a name, when we have two English ones to choose between?

<sup>8</sup> Compounds of this formation, were common till of late years; as *fig-smith*, a liar; *shape-smith*, a posture-master, &c. &c. The pause is here marked with a metrical point.

<sup>9</sup> Price considers the *ar* in *arkwate* merely an augmentative prefix. I am not however convinced by his reasoning.

<sup>10</sup> See p. 169.

<sup>11</sup> The same rhythm is also found in such parts of Cædmon's poem, as partake of the lyrical character.

trusive and artificial, but it must have been naturally suggested by these earlier rhythms; for the main qualities, which fitted them for the lyrical song, are such as alliteration would greatly strengthen. It is highly probable, that to these rhythms the alliterative system owed its origin.

We have already had one specimen of lyrical song, I will now give another of later date. In both, there is the same kind of rhythm; but the one was a song of triumph over

## 1066 Here

Ead | ward kinge : eng | la hlaf | ord  
 Send | e soth | -fæ[ste]<sup>3</sup> : sawl | e to crist | e.  
 On god | es wær | a<sup>4</sup> : gast | hal | igne.

He | on wor | ulda her | : wun | ode thrag | e.  
 On kyn | e-thrym | me : cræf | tig ræd | a.  
 Feo | wer and twen | tig<sup>7</sup> : freo | lice weal | dend.  
 Win | tra gerim | es<sup>6</sup> : weolm<sup>9</sup> bryt | node.

And healf e tid<sup>10</sup> : hæl | etha weal | dend.  
 Weold | wel | gethung | en<sup>11</sup> : wal | um and scot | tum.  
 And brytt | um eac | : byr | e æth | elred | es  
 Eng | lum and sex | um : or | et-mæg | um.

Swa | ymb-clyp | path : ceald | -brimmas | .<sup>12</sup>  
 Thæt eall | ead | warde : æth | elum king | e.

<sup>1</sup> See p. 357.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 357, note 6.

<sup>3</sup> The Worcester MS. has *soth fæste*; in the Abingdon MS. the three last letters are torn off.

<sup>4</sup> Certain nouns regularly formed their dative in *a*. In the present poem we have *wæru* and *worolda*.

<sup>5</sup> Such appears to be the force of the preposition *on*. In the Menelociis [l. 216] we have,

Æthele Andreas : up on roderum  
 His gast ageaf : *on Godes wære*  
 Fus on forthweg.

The noble Andreas, aloft in the heavens,  
 His spirit render'd—in God's promise trusting !  
 Prompt for departure !

<sup>6</sup> See p. 382, n. 4.

<sup>7</sup> In the MSS. we have the letters *xxiii*.

<sup>8</sup> No metrical point.

<sup>9</sup> This is doubtless a mistake for *weolm*. See *welan brytnodon*, p. 368, l. 8

<sup>10</sup> The Worcester MS. gives the section thus, *And he | hæl | o-tid*. I have cor-

the public enemy, and the other commemorates the death of an English king.

The Confessor's Death-Song is found both in the Abingdon and Worcester copies of the Chronicle. My text is taken from the former. The metrical point divides the sections; and I have marked it (for the reason already given<sup>1</sup>) whenever it was found indicating the final pause.

1066 Now<sup>2</sup>

King Edward, lord of the Engle,  
Sent his righteous soul to Christ,  
(In God's promise trusting)<sup>3</sup> a spirit holy.

He, in the world here, wonn'd a throw;<sup>4</sup>  
Amid the kingly throng, sage in his counsels.  
Four-and-twenty winters, in number,  
Gen'rously ruling, wealth he parted.

And he, in his day of strength (the Lord of heroes)  
Rul'd most righteously, Wael's and Scots  
And likewise Brits (child of Ethelred he!)—  
Engle too, and Sexe, the sons of battle.

Whatsoe'er the cold seas enclip—<sup>13</sup>  
All that<sup>14</sup> Edward, the noble king,

strued the passage with this reading, as I can make nothing satisfactory of *healfe tid*. The reader, however, may be more successful.

<sup>11</sup> No metrical point.

<sup>12</sup> The Worcester MS. has *cealda* (cealde) *brimmas*; but *cald brimmas* is possibly correct, for this adjective *ceald* is frequently compounded.

<sup>13</sup> Witness you ever-burning lights above,  
You elements, that *clip* us round about. *Othello*, 3. 3. 463.

Where is he living, *clipp'd in* with the sea,  
That chides the banks of England, Scotland, Wales—  
Which calls me pupil, &c. ? 1 *H. IV.* 3. 1. 44.

There is some difficulty as to the proper accentuation of verbs which take *ymb* for a prefix. Here the prefix is clearly *not* accented.

<sup>14</sup> We have an idiom very similar to this in Fletcher's lines,

*All that comes near him,  
He thinks are come on purpose to betray him.*

*Nob. Gent.* 1. 2.

Compare: "and of sloh call *that* thær betst wæs on tham lande," and slew all the noblest of the country. *A. S. Chron.* an. 1054.

Hyrd | on hold | lice : hag | e-steal | de<sup>1</sup> menn |.

Wæs á | blith | e-mod : beal | u-leas kyng |.

Theah | he lang | ær : land | e bereaf | od.

Wun | ode wræc | lastum : wid | e geond eorth | an.

Syth | than cnut | ofercóm : kynn | æth | elreð | es.

And den | a<sup>2</sup> weol | don : deor | e ric | e.

Eng | la land | es

Eaht | and twen | tig.<sup>3</sup>

Win | tra gerim | es : wel | an bryt | nodan

Syth | than forth | becóm : freo | lice<sup>4</sup> in | geatwum |.

Kyn | inge-kys | tum gód : clæn | e and mil | de.

Ead | ward se æth | ela : eth | el bewer | ode.

Land | and leod | e : oth | thæt lung | er becom |.

Death | se byt | era : and | swa deor | e<sup>5</sup> genam |.

Æth | elne | of eorth | an

Eng | las fer | edon.

Soth | fæste sawl | e : in | nan sweg | les leoht |.

And | se frod | a swa theah : befæst | e thæt ric | e.

Heah | -thungen | um menn : har | olde sylf | um.

Æth | elum eorl | e : se | in eal | le tid |.

Hyrd | e hold | lice : hær | ran syn | um.

Word | um and dæd | um : wih | te ne | agæl | de.<sup>6</sup>

Thæs | the thearf | wæs : thæs theod | -kyning | es.

The following poem is found in a volume of homilies, supposed to have been written in the twelfth century, and now in the Bodleian Library. It affords us one of the latest specimens of Anglo-Saxon versification. As I have not had

The | wes bold | gebyld : er thu | ibor | en wer | e

The | wes mol | de<sup>7</sup> imynt : er thu | of mod | er com | e

Ac | hit nes | no idiht : ne | theo deop | nes imet | en

Nes | gyt iloc | ed : hu long | hit the wer | e

<sup>1</sup> *Hægsteald* and *Heahsteald* are found with the meanings—unmarried, a bachelor, a virgin. *Hægsteald* and *Hægsteald-man* are used by Caedmon, in the sense of prince or noble. There can be little doubt that the latter part of the compound is the same as *gesteald*, a station. The first syllable *hæg* or *heah* may be the adjective *heah*, high; but this does not well agree with the first meaning of the compound. Can it be *hæg*, an inclosure, a partition? If so, *hægsteald* might mean, one with a seat apart—whether prince or bachelor. *Hægsteald*, in the text, seems to be equivalent to *Hæg-gesteald*.

Faithfully serv'd—the men of princely seat.

Aye blithe-hearted was the harmless king ;  
 Though he long erst, of land bereft,  
 In exile-wand'rings dwelt—widely o'er earth ;  
 Sithen Knut o'ercame the kin of Ethelred,  
 And Danes ruled the dear realm  
 Of Engle-land.

Eight-and-twenty

Winters in number, wealth they parted.  
 Sithen forth came, sumptuous in attire,  
 For kingly bounties famous, pure and mild,  
 Edward the noble. His country he shielded,  
 His land and people ; till on a sudden came  
 The bitter death, and took (to our cost !)  
 The noble man from earth.

Angels bare

His righteous soul into heaven's light ;  
 But the wise prince entrusted the realm  
 To a high-minded man, to Harold self,  
 The noble earl ; he, at every season,  
 Faithfully serv'd his Lord  
 In word and deed ; nor fail'd in aught,  
 Of that was needful for the people's king.

---

an opportunity of consulting the MS., my text has been taken from the copy in Mr. Thorpe's *Analecta*. It is certainly more correct than Conybeare's. [It occurs on fol. 170 of MS. Bodley 343.]

---

For thee was a dwelling fixt, ere thou wert born ;  
 For thee was earth appointed, ere thou of thy mother camest.

But it is not dight, ne the depth y-measur'd,  
 Ne is it yet look'd to, how long it should be for thee.

---

<sup>2</sup> *Dena*, in the purer dialects *Dene*.

<sup>3</sup> In the MSS. xxviii.

<sup>4</sup> The Worcester MS. has *freolic*, and I think more correctly.

<sup>5</sup> *Deore* seems to be used in this line, in the same sense, in which we now use *dearly*—"dearly did he rue it," &c.

<sup>6</sup> The context seems to require that *agælde* should be here construed as a neuter verb.

<sup>7</sup> The substantive has two forms, *mold* and *molda*.

Nu | me<sup>1</sup> the bring | æth : ther | thu be | on scealt |  
 Nu | me sceal | the met | en : and | tha mold | seoth | tha  
 Ne bith | no thin hus | : hea | lice | itin | bred  
 Hit bith | unheh<sup>2</sup> | and lah : thon | ne thu list | ther-in | ne  
 The hel | e-wag | es beoth lag | e : sid | -wages | unheg | e<sup>2</sup>  
 The rof | bith ibyld | : thi | re bros | te ful neh |  
 Swa | thu scealt | on mold | : wun | ien | ful cald |<sup>3</sup>  
 Dim | me and deorc | æ : thet den | ful | æt on hond |  
 Dur | eleas is | thæt hus | . and dearc | hit is | with-in | nen  
 Thær | thu bist fes | te bi-dytt | : and dæth | hefth tha cæg | e  
 Lad | lic is | thæt eorth | -hus : and grim | in | ne to wun | ien  
 Ther | thu scealt wun | ien : and wurm | es the | to-del | eth  
 Thus | thu bist | ilegd | : and lad | æst thin | e frond | en  
 Nefst | thu nen | ne freond | : the | the wyl | le far | en to |  
 Thæt ef | re wul | e lok | ien : hu | the thæt hus | the lik | ie  
 Thæt æf | re undon |<sup>2</sup> : the wul | e tha dur | e  
 And the | æfter lih | ten : for son | e thu | bist lad | lic  
 And lad | to i-seon | ne<sup>4</sup> .

Other lines follow, but many of the letters are illegible.

In this poem, the alliteration is very feebly marked; and in one verse it appears to have been entirely superseded by the middle rime. The section 7. *p* occurs twice, and the negative prefix *un* never takes the accent—clear proofs that the change which gradually produced our modern rhythm and accentuation, had already begun to operate. The peculiarities of the language also well deserve our notice; such as the old English plural in *fronden*, and the use of the preposition *to* before the Present Infinitive, in *to wunien*. This is the earliest example I have met with of an idiom, *now* so common.

There is one poem with pretensions to an antiquity so remote, as may probably justify us in referring it to a

<sup>1</sup> This word is very commonly met with in Robert of Gloucester. I do not remember to have seen it in the purer Saxon.

<sup>2</sup> False accentuation.

<sup>3</sup> In this verse is no alliteration. [*Cald* is a partial rime to *mold*.—W.W. S.]

<sup>4</sup> The language of this poem seems to differ from Layamons (see ch. 3) only in being more correctly written.

Now man thee bringeth, where thou shalt bide;  
Now man shall measure thee, and sithen the ground.

Nor will thy house be highly timber'd—  
'Twill be unhigh and low; when thou ly'st therein,  
The heel-walls will be low, the cover-walls unhigh,  
The roof will be fixt thy breast full nigh.

So thou shalt in earth won full cold,  
Dimly and darkly—that den is foul toth' touch.

Doorless is that house, and dark it is within;  
There shalt thou be fast shut in, and death have the key.  
Loathly is that earth-house, and grim to won in,  
There shalt thou won, and worms share thee.

Thus thou shalt be laid, and loathsome to thy friends;  
Ne hast thou one friend, that thee will fare to,  
That ever will look, how that house likes thee,  
That ever for thee will undo the door,  
And to thee go down; for soon thou shalt be loathly,  
And loathsome to see.

distinct æra. It is found in the celebrated Exeter MS.<sup>5</sup>; and has been named by Conybeare "The Song of the Traveller." It appears without introduction or explanation,<sup>6</sup> among other Anglo-Saxon poems, so that from internal evidence alone can we judge of its age, or of its origin.

The Song of the Traveller professes to record the wanderings of a certain "Gleeman," the contemporary of Eormanic and of Ætla.<sup>7</sup> As the East-Got died in 375, and Ætla was not king (as described in the poem) till 433, these wanderings must have lasted nearly sixty years. We are told that he visited the court of Eormanic in his *first* journey, as the follower of Ealhild, and probably as the youthful page of that princess. If this were so, the

<sup>5</sup> This MS. was given to the Cathedral by Bishop Leofric in the reign of the Confessor; and may have been written in the latter half of the 10th or early in the 11th century.

<sup>6</sup> The poem opens with a sort of preface, like that prefixed to Alfred's metres; but it is in verse, and of almost equal antiquity with the poem.

<sup>7</sup> The Hermanaric and Attila of Roman History.



poem may have been written soon after the age of eighty—an advanced age, it is true, but one that agrees well with the general style and character of the poem.

About the year 370, began the great struggle between the Goth and the Hun. The former, though driven from the plains of Hungary, withstood the invader step by step, till, in the year 439, they bent before the genius and the power of *Ætla*. The hoof, beneath which the grass withered, was then turned upon the Empire.

Now it seems clear that the Goths, though a defeated, were still, when this poem was written, an independent people; the enemies—not the allies of *Ætla*. It seems no less clear, from the slight mention made of him, that the king of the Huns had not yet run the course, which made him a hero of the Gothic *myth*, no less than of Roman History. If this reasoning be sound, the poem must have been written between the years 433 and 440.

If we would test its genuineness by its agreement with history, we must first pick out the Gothic annals from the Greek and Latin writers of the period, aided by such scanty notices as the monks have left us. With these helps, we may fix between the years 375 and 435, the Ostrogoth Hermanaric, the Visigoth Wallia, the Burgundians Gibica and Gundicarius—and these are respectively the Eormanric, the Wala, the Gifica, and the Guthhere of the Gleeman. Theodric the Amaling, and Leodwig the Frank, were a few years too late; and the conqueror of Italy, though he soon became the great centre of our early romance, is not once alluded to. The sober manner, in which Eormanric and his generals are spoken of, is also worthy of notice. We see none of the fable which soon afterwards enveloped their names; they are still the mere creatures of history.

The geography of the poem is full as remarkable as its historical allusions. The different Gothic races appear still to have held the lands on which Tacitus found them. The Swefe had not yet migrated to the Rhine; they were still on the Baltic, and neighbours to the English. The East-Goten also were “east from Ongle,” an expression

from which more than one important inference may be drawn. I think it shows that the preface (in which it occurs) was written by an Englishman, who had not yet left the continent; and that the East-Goten, though "east of Ongle" in the time of Eormanic, had already left their native plains for the luxuries of Italy—or why should their former seats be pointed out with such particularity? The preface may have been written about the close of the fifth, or the beginning of the sixth century.

Of the different theories which may be started as to the origin of this singular poem, the one which seems to me beset with fewest difficulties, is that which maintains its genuineness. If we suppose it to be a forgery, where shall we discover a *motive* for the fraud? where shall we find any analogous case in the history of that early period? Above all, where shall we find the learning and the knowledge necessary to perpetrate such a fraud successfully?

Upon the changes, which the language of the poem may have undergone in the five centuries which elapsed before the MS. was written, I shall not venture an opinion. Our knowledge of that language seems to me much too scanty to speculate upon such a subject safely. Nor is it much easier to form a judgement, as to the matter which may have been interpolated. It has been indeed supposed, that a Gleeman of the 4th [5th] century could hardly have heard of the Medes and the Persians, the Assyrians and the Idumeans, the Israelites and the Jews. But Ulphilas had already translated the Scriptures, and all the leading Gothic tribes were Christians—better Christians, if we believe the Roman historian, than his own countrymen. We must remember too, that the Wendle were lords of Africa, the Swefe of Spain, the West-Goten of Gaul, and that Rome had been already once visited by a Gothic conqueror—what is there surprising in one of the same race availing himself of the facilities, which then existed, for travelling through the Empire? In some districts, he would find his countrymen the rulers; in others, he would be secured by the fears of a degenerate, or the courtesies of a civilized people.

Conybeare has given a translation of this poem; but his transcript was an inaccurate one, and his version more faulty than it probably would have been, had he lived to publish it. My text is taken from the Museum copy of the MS., which

Wid | -sith math | olad | e : word | -hord onleac |  
 Se | the mæst | :<sup>1</sup> mæth | a of | er eorth | an  
 Folc | a geond-ferd | e : oft | he flett | e gethah |  
 Myn | e-lic | ne math | thum : hin | e from myrg | ingum  
 Æth | ele | onwoc | on<sup>2</sup> : he | mid ealh | -hilde  
 Fæl | re freoth | u-web | ban : form | an sith | e  
 Hreth | -cyning | es : ham | gesoh | te  
 East | an of ong | le : eor | man-ric | es  
 Wrath | es wær | -logan

Ongan | tha worn | sprec | an

Fel | a ic mon | na gefrægn | : mæg | thum weald | an  
 Sceal theod | a . gehwylc | : theaw | um lif | gan  
 Eorl | æfter oth | rum : eth | le ræd | an  
 Se | the his theod | en-stol | : gethe | on wil | e .  
 Thar | a wæs<sup>3</sup> : wal | a hwil | e sel | ast .  
 And al | ex-and | reas : eal | ra ric | ost .

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Kemble marks this section as "hopelessly in fault." I do not see his difficulty. [Grein inserts *monna* before *mæst*.—W. W. S.]

<sup>2</sup> That is "who most visited the great," &c.

<sup>3</sup> There is difficulty in the construction of this passage. *Onwacan* is commonly used as a neuter verb in one of the senses, *to awake, to be descended from*. Here it is clearly active, and I have given it the meaning which seems best to suit the context. I have also not met with *myne-lic* elsewhere, and have rendered it as if it were a mere variation from *mænelic*.

It has been said that the Traveller was "of high birth among the Myrgings." Perhaps we might translate *onwocan* "begat," in which case the gleeman may have been a noble.

Compare: "Fuerunt parentes mandato ejus (Adolph, 2nd Earl of North-  
 bingia) plebes Holzatorum Sturmatorum et Marcomannorum. Vocantur autem  
 usitato more Marcomanni gentes undecunque collectæ, quæ Marcam incolant."  
 —Helmond, Chron. Slavor.; Leibnitz, Script. Rerum Brunsv.; Grimm's  
 Deutsche Runen, p. 152.

<sup>4</sup> Literally, *love-weaver*. This epithet is applied to women in other Anglo-Saxon poems.

<sup>5</sup> The poet distinguishes between the people *Engle*, and their country *Ongle*.

<sup>6</sup> The last cruel act of Eormannic has been worked up into many a wondrous tale (*myth*, the Germans would call it) by the active invention of the north. Earlier writers give us the simple history. When the Huns first began to

has had the advantage of a careful revision by Sir Frederic Madden. It differs, in some few particulars, from the transcript which Mr. Kemble has given us in his edition of *Beowulf*.

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Wide travel told—his word-store unlock'd,  
 He who most Greatness<sup>2</sup> over earth  
 And Nations visited. Oft in hall he gat  
 Memorable largess. Him from among the Myrgings  
 Nobles rear'd. He, with Ealh-hild,  
 (Leal artificer of love!<sup>4</sup>) in his first journey,  
 Sought the home of the fierce king,  
 East from Ongle—<sup>5</sup> the home of Eormanric,  
 Wrathful trechour!<sup>6</sup>

Gan he the number tell.

Many men I wot of, nations ruling!  
 Must each people live under laws;  
 Each earl, after other, for his land take counsel—  
 He that wills his throne to flourish.  
 Of these was Wala<sup>9</sup> whilom most prosperous;  
 And Alex-andreas<sup>10</sup> of all most powerful,

---

press upon the Goths; one of Eormanric's chiefs proved false. The tyrant ordered his wife *Suanilth* to be torn asunder by wild horses, and soon after, fell beneath the swords of her two brothers *Sarus* and *Ammius*. The latter we shall hear more of presently; see p. 385, n. 7.

<sup>2</sup> That is, of nations he had visited.

Here ends the introduction, which I think must have been written before the Engle left the continent, for the poet clearly refers to the old country under the title of *Ongle*, and we know this name was given to the new settlement, at a very early period of its history. From the attention paid to the geography, I suspect it was also written after the Ostrogoths had left the Vistula—probably between the years 480 and 547, the date of Ida's landing at Bam-borough.

<sup>9</sup> A metrical point follows *was*, and thus preserves the alliteration. Mr. Kemble has sacrificed it by his division,

Thara was Wala : hwile selast

The metrical point is, as the reader will see, of very rare occurrence.

<sup>10</sup> This is doubtless the Wallia of Roman history; he who brought Spain under the dominion of the Emperor, and settled the Visigoths in the district round Thoulouse, A.D. 417.

<sup>11</sup> Who Alex-andreas is may be doubted. If the poet mean the Macedonian, it is the only instance in which he has noticed any one, *not* a contemporary.

Mon|na cyn|nes : and | he mæst | gethah |  
 Thar|a . the | ic of|er fold|an : gefræg|en hæb|be.

Æt|la weold hun|num : eor|man-ric got|um .  
 Bec|ca ban|ingum<sup>1</sup> : bur|gundum gif|ica .  
 Cas|ere | weold creac|um<sup>2</sup> : and cæl|ic finnum .  
 Hag|ena holm|-rycum : and hend|en glom|mum .  
 Wit|ta weold swæf|um<sup>3</sup> : wad|a hæls|ingum .  
 Meac|a myr|gingum<sup>4</sup> : mearc|-healf hund|ingum .  
 Theod|ric weold fronc|um<sup>5</sup> : thyl|e rond|ingum  
 Breoc|a brond|ingum<sup>6</sup> : bil|ling wern|um  
 Os|wine | weold eow|um<sup>7</sup> : and yt|um gef|wulf .  
 Fin|folc- | walding : fres|na cyn|ne .  
 Sig|e-her|e leng|est : sæ|denum weold .  
 Hnæf|hoc|ingum<sup>8</sup> : helm | wulf|ingum .  
 Wald | wo|ingum<sup>9</sup> : wod | thyr|ingum .  
 Sæ|ferth sycg|um : swe|om ong|end-theow .  
 Sceaft|-here ym|brum<sup>10</sup> : sceaf|a lōng|-beardum  
 Hún|-hæt wer|um<sup>11</sup> : and hol|en wros|num  
 Hring|-weald was hat|en : her|e-far|ena cyn|ing .  
 Of|fa weold ong|le : ale|wih den|um  
 Se|was thar|a manna : mod|gast eal|ra .

No | hwæthre he | ofer of|fan : eorl|-scype frem|ede .  
 Ac of|fa geslog : ær|est monua

<sup>1</sup> The poet here enumerates those princes, he visited during his sixty years of wandering, who seemed best to discharge their duties. Thus he makes Gifca king of the Burgundians, though he also visited their king Guthere; and Meaca king of the Myrgings, though he received a favour from his successor Eadgils. As Ætla reigned sixty years after Eormannic, these several princes were certainly not contemporaries of each other.

<sup>2</sup> I have endeavoured to preserve the real names of these several tribes. The Goten and the Geats were distinct races as early as the fourth century: were we to translate these words by our modern term Goths, this distinction would be lost.

<sup>3</sup> A metrical point.

<sup>4</sup> The Gibica of the Burgundian laws.

<sup>5</sup> The Suevi of the Latins.

<sup>6</sup> Brecca with his Brondings are mentioned in Beowulf, as the enemies of the Geats.

<sup>7</sup> Probably the Varini of Tacitus. They lived in Pomerania.

<sup>8</sup> Perhaps the men of Eo-land. Ubii of Cologne? Or *Aviones*, Tac. Germ. c. 40?

<sup>9</sup> Attuarii, Vell. Pat. 2, 105; Chatuarii, Strabo, 6, 291; Chasuarii, Tac. Germ. c. 34. Entered the Frankish league as Attuarii.

Amongst mankind; and he most won  
Of those, that o'er earth heard of I have.

Ætla<sup>1</sup> rul'd the Huns; Eormanric the Goten;<sup>2</sup>  
Becca the Banings; Gifica<sup>4</sup> the Burgends;  
The Kaiser rul'd the Creeks [Greeks], and Cælic the Fins,  
Hagene the men of Holm-ric; and Henden the Glomms;  
Witta rul'd the Swæfe;<sup>5</sup> Wada the Hælsings;  
Meaca the Myrgings; Mearc-healf the Hundings;  
Theodric rul'd the Fronks; Thyle the Rondings;  
Brecca<sup>6</sup> the Brondings; Billing the Werne;<sup>7</sup>  
Oswine rul'd the Eows,<sup>8</sup> and Gefwulf the Yts,<sup>9</sup>  
Fin, Folkwaldas son,<sup>10</sup> the Fresen kin;  
Sige-here long while the Sea-dene rul'd,  
Hnæf<sup>11</sup> the Hocings, Helm the Wulfings,  
Wald the Woings,<sup>12</sup> Wod the Thydings,<sup>13</sup>  
Sæferth the Sygga, Ongen-theow the Sweon,<sup>14</sup>  
Scaft-here the Ymbre,<sup>15</sup> Sceafta the Long-bearden,<sup>16</sup>  
Hun-hæt the Wers,<sup>17</sup> and Holen the Wrosnen,  
Hring-weald was hight king of the army-comrades,  
Offa rul'd Ongle, Alewih the Dene.  
He was of all these men the haughtiest—

No where did he,<sup>18</sup> beyond Offa, earlship<sup>19</sup> frame;  
But Offa stablisht (earliest of all men—

<sup>10</sup> Fin and Folewolda are mentioned in Beowulf. The conquest of Fin's stronghold, Finnes-burgh, was the subject of a noble poem, of which only a fragment has survived to us.

Whether the Fresen, whom Fin ruled, were settled south of the Elbe, where lived the Roman Frisii, and the modern Friese, or were the Strand-Friese of Holstein, may be doubted. As many Fresen came over with Ida, we have an interest in the question, but it is one of too much difficulty, to be discussed in the compass of a note.

<sup>11</sup> Hnæf is mentioned in Beowulf, and Hoco as his ancestor. It is probable, that the Hocings and the Wulfings were two families, rather than two races.

<sup>12</sup> The Woings are mentioned in Beowulf.

<sup>13</sup> The Thydings lived in the centre of Germany—in the modern Thuringerwald.

<sup>14</sup> The Suiones of Tacitus, ancestors of the Swedes.

<sup>15</sup> Ambrones, dwelling near the river Emmeren; Furstenburg, Monumenta Paderbornensia, p. 181.

<sup>16</sup> I give these people their real name. Long-beardan does not mean *long-beards*, but *long-bearded ones*.

<sup>17</sup> Query, Burii; Tac. Germ. c. 43.

<sup>18</sup> [Rather, 'Yet did he not.'—W. W. S.]

<sup>19</sup> That is, the reputation and influence of a great earl or chieftain.

Cniht<sup>1</sup> | wes | ende : cyn | e-ric | a mæst |  
 Næn | ig e | fen-eald him : eor | l-scipe mar | an  
 Onoret | te : an | e sweord | e  
 Merc | e gemær | de : with<sup>2</sup> | myr | gurgum |  
 Bi fi | -fel dor | e . heold | on forth | siththan  
 Eng | le and swæf | e : swa | hit of | fa geslog |

Hroth | wulf and hroth | gar : heold | on lengest  
 Sib | be sæt som | ne : suh | tor-fæd | ran<sup>6</sup>  
 Sith | than hy | for-wræc | on : wic | inga cynn |  
 And ing | eldes : ord | for-big | dan  
 For-heow | an sæt heor | ote : heath | o-beard | na<sup>11</sup> | thrym |.

Swa | ic geond-ferd | e fel | a : fremd | ra land | a  
 Geond gin | ne grund | : god | es and yf | les .  
 Thær | ic cun | nade : cnos | le bidæl | ed  
 Freo | -mægum feor : fol | gade wid | e .  
 For | thon ic | mæg sing | an : and secg | an spell |  
 Mæn | an for | e meng | o<sup>12</sup> : in meod | u-heal | le  
 Hu | me cyn | e-god | e : cys | tum doh | ten.

Ic wæs | mid hun | um : and | mid hreth | -gotum .  
 Mid swe | om and | mid geat | um : and | mid suth | -denum .  
 Mid wen | lum ic wæs | and mid wærn | um : and | mid wic | ingum .  
 Mid gef | thum ic wæs | and mid win | edum<sup>17</sup> : and | mid gef | legum .

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Kemble makes a compound of these two words,

*cniht-wesende.*

<sup>2</sup> On this preposition hangs the question, whether the wandering poet was by birth an Englishman or a Swæf. If we might construe, "*over against the Myrgings*," he was English. But I fear, that when used in this sense, *with* never governed a dative. Yet it is strange, that a Myrking should thus speak of one that had triumphed over his country—is it an interpolation? [See p. 384.]

<sup>3</sup> Like *Fifel-stream* (see p. 350, n. 4), this word is without satisfactory explanation.

<sup>4</sup> It is clear from this, that the Engle and the Swæfe were neighbouring nations; and consequently that the latter had not yet left the coasts of the Baltic. This is one of the many circumstances, that prove the great antiquity of the poem.

Mr. Kemble supposes the Swæfe to have "generally acknowledged the power of Offa." They appear to have been vanquished by him, but certainly were never subject to him.

<sup>5</sup> These cousins reigned together over Denmark.

<sup>6</sup> *Fædera* commonly means a father's brother; here it is clearly an uncle's *uncle*. So *patruus* in the Latin, and *vetter* in the German, mean both uncle and cousin. I never saw *suhtr* elsewhere, but *suhtriga* means a cousin.

<sup>7</sup> That is *punished*.

<sup>8</sup> The pirates were called *Wicings*, or baymen, from the bays where they hid themselves.

While yet a youth!) kingdom the largest.  
 No one, of equal age with him, greater earlship  
 Foster'd. With unaided sword,  
 The marches he widened, against the Myrginga,  
 By Fifel door.<sup>3</sup> Held thenceforth  
 Engle and Swæfe, as Offa fixt it.<sup>4</sup>

Hrothwulf and Hrothgar<sup>5</sup> held long while  
 Peace together, (brothers' sons they!)  
 Sithen they wreak'd<sup>7</sup> the Wicing-race,<sup>8</sup>  
 And Ingeld's<sup>9</sup> sword [*or* vanguard] brought low,  
 And fell'd, at Heorot,<sup>10</sup> the Heatho-bearden crowd.

So I fared through many stranger-lands,  
 Through the spacious earth; of good and evil  
 There I tasted; from family parted,  
 From kinsmen far, widely I served.  
 Therefore may I sing, and story tell—  
 Relate 'fore the meiny, in mead-hall,  
 How me the high-born with largess blest.

I was with the Huns, and with the Hreth-Goten,  
 With the Sweon, and with the Geats,<sup>13</sup> and with the south Dene,  
 With the Wenle<sup>14</sup> I was, and with the Wærne, and with the Wicings,  
 With the Gefths<sup>15</sup> I was, and with the Wineds,<sup>16</sup> and with the Geflege<sup>17</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Ingeld was Hrothgar's uncle. There is mention made of his sword in Beowulf, but I cannot easily reconcile the two passages.

<sup>10</sup> Heorot was Hrothgar's palace, the scene of Beowulf's struggle with the terrific Grendel.

<sup>11</sup> As *long-bearden* were the long-bearded ones, so *heatho-beardan* were the war-bearded ones. A war-beard I suppose was a short one, such as we have reason to believe was worn by the northern pirates.

<sup>12</sup> *Mængo*, A. S. the attendants, the court, the *meiny*.

They summon'd up their *meiny*—straight took horse.

*K. Lear*, 2. 2. 35.

[But this *meiny* is a word of *French* origin.—W. W. S.]

<sup>13</sup> Thorkelin would fix the Geats in Pomerania, but there is little doubt they were of Jutland.

<sup>14</sup> No doubt the Wendla-leod of Beowulf, and the Vandals of the Romans.

<sup>15</sup> The Gefths are mentioned in Beowulf; were they not the Gepidæ of the Latin historians?

<sup>16</sup> The Venedi of Tacitus. This Slavish race, under the name of Wends, play a very important part in the history of Germany. They occupied the vacant seats of the East-Goten. Even at the present day we may consider the Elbe as the boundary line between the two races—the Slaves and the Goths.

<sup>17</sup> A metrical point.

<sup>18</sup> Query, Helveconæ; Tac. Germ. c. 43.



Mid eng|lum ic wæs . | and mid swæf|um : and | mid sē|enum .  
 Mid seax|um ic wæs | and syc|gum : and | mid sweord|-werum .  
 Mid hron|um ic wæs | and mid dean|um : and | mid beath|o-  
 reamum

Mid thyr|ingum | ic wæs| : and | mid throw|endum  
 And | mid bur|gendum : thær|ic beah | gethah .<sup>4</sup>  
 Me | thær guth|-here | forgeaf| : glæd|licne math|thum  
 Song|es to lean|e : næs | thæt sæn|e cyn|ing .

Mid fronc|um ic wæs | . and mid frys|um : and | mid frumting|um .  
 Mid rug|um ic wæs | and mid glom|mum : and | mid rum|-walum .  
 Swilc|e ic wæs | on eat|ule : mid ælf|-wine|  
 Se hæf|de mon|-cynnes : min|e gefræg|e  
 Leoht|este hond| : lof|es to wyr|cenne  
 Heort|an un|hneawest|e : hring|a gedal|es .  
 Beorht|ra beag|a : bearn | ead|wines .

Mid sēr|cingum | ic wæs| : and | mid sēr|ingum .  
 Mid creac|um ic wæs| . and mid find|um<sup>12</sup> : and | mid cas|ere  
 Se|the win|burga : gewæld | sh|te.  
 Wiol|ane and wil|na : and wal|a ric|es .  
 Mid scot|tum ic wæs | and mid peoh|tum<sup>12</sup> : and | mid scrid|e-fin|num .  
 Mid lid|-wicing|um ic wæs . | and mid leon|um<sup>12</sup> : and | mid long| .  
 beardum .  
 Mid hæth|num . and | mid hæl|ethum<sup>12</sup> : and | mid hund|ingum .  
 Mid is|rael|um ic wæs|<sup>12</sup> : and | mid ex|syring|um .

<sup>1</sup> The men of Ænen ?

<sup>2</sup> Query, Suardones ; Tac. Germ. c. 40.

<sup>3</sup> *Hrons*-ness is mentioned in Beowulf.

<sup>4</sup> The Heatho-Reome, or War-Reome *may* have been the pirates of Rum near Sleswic.

<sup>5</sup> *Getheon* is generally considered a neuter verb, but in this passage seems to be active. I would also say it was active in Cæd. fol. 161. Neither Lye's construction of the passage nor that of Mr. Thorpe is satisfactory.

<sup>6</sup> In the Codex of the Burgundian Laws we find the names of four kings, Gibica, Gislaharius, Gothomarus, and *Gundaharius*. The first and last were probably the Gifca and Guth-here visited by the Traveller. Both these princes must have reigned during the sixty years of wandering ; for all writers agree that Gundaharius was killed by the Huns, and though they differ as to the time of his death, yet no one places it lower than the reign of Ætla.

The intrusion of an *n*, before a *d* or *t* may be paralleled even in our own dialects ; thus *dilantory*, *solantory*, *vomit*, for *dilatory*, *solitary*, and *vomit*. See Forby's Vocabulary. [The *n* is original, not intrusive.—W. W. S.]

<sup>7</sup> Rugii ; Tac. Germ. c. 44. Terra Rugorum = Russeia ; A.S. Laws, i. 450.

<sup>8</sup> According to German antiquaries, the Glommi were a Sorabic tribe.

<sup>9</sup> The Rumwæls were the Italians, and other Welsh (Celtic) races under the sway of Rome.

With the Engle I was, and with the Swæfe, and with the Ænene,<sup>1</sup>  
 With the Sexe I was, and with the Sycgs, and with the Swordmen,<sup>2</sup>  
 With the Hrons<sup>3</sup> I was, and with the Deane, and with the Heatho-  
 Reame,<sup>4</sup>

With the Thydings I was, and with the Throwenda,  
 And with the Burgends—there I a beigh got,  
 There Guthere<sup>5</sup> gave me a precious gift,  
 For my songs meed—no sluggish king was he !

With the Fronks I was, and with the Frysen, and with the Frumtings,  
 With the Ruge<sup>7</sup> I was, and with the Glomms,<sup>8</sup> and with the Rum-  
 waela,<sup>9</sup>

Likewise I was in Eatule<sup>10</sup> with Ælfwine  
 He had, of all mankind (to my mind)  
 Hand the lightest<sup>11</sup> in earning of praise—  
 Heart most free, in dealing out of rings,  
 And bright beighs—Edwine's bairn !

With the Sercings I was, and with the Serings,  
 With the Creaca [Greeks] I was, and with the Fins, and with the Kaiser,<sup>12</sup>  
 He that o'er war-burghs held the sway,  
 O'er<sup>14</sup> and o'er Wael-ric<sup>15</sup>.

With the Scots I was, and with the Peohts, and with the Scride-Fins,<sup>16</sup>  
 With the Lid-wicings I was,<sup>17</sup> and with the Leons : and with the Long-  
 bearden<sup>18</sup>.

With the Heathen I was, and with the Heroes,<sup>19</sup> and with the Hundings,  
 With the Israele I was, and with the Ex-syrings,<sup>20</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Italy.

<sup>11</sup> *Leoktest*, A.S. most active, lightest.

*Light of foot as a wild roe.*

2 *Sam.* 2. 18.

<sup>12</sup> A metrical point.

<sup>13</sup> This *may* have been the great Theodosius.

<sup>14</sup> Mr. Kemble makes *Wiolane* and *Wilna* proper names. The section is a puzzling one on any hypothesis.

<sup>15</sup> See note 9.

<sup>16</sup> The Scride-fins are mentioned by Procopius. They appear to have been the most powerful tribe of the Fins.

<sup>17</sup> The Lid-wicings were the Bretons of France.

<sup>18</sup> The Lombards had not as yet left their seats on the Elbe.

<sup>19</sup> In the year 360 Ulphilas translated the Scriptures into Gothic, and in the course of 50 years all the great German tribes bordering upon the Empire—the East Goten, the Burgends, the Wenle, the Swæfs of Spain—and it would seem from this passage the Swæfs of Germany also—were Christians. The Sweon, the Dene, the Engle and Franks were still heathen.

<sup>20</sup> As to the pronunciation of the *x*, see p. 348, n. 2.

Mid ebr|eum . and | mid in|deum<sup>1</sup> : and | mid eg|yptum .  
 Mid moid|um ic wæs | and mid pers|um : and | mid myr|gingum . and  
 mof|dingum

And | ongend myrg|ingum : and | mid am|othing|um<sup>2</sup>  
 Mid east|-thyring|um ic wæs | and mid e|olum<sup>1</sup> : and | mid is'tum .  
 and id|uming|um .

And | ic wæs | mid eor|man-ric|e : eal|le thrag|e  
 Thær|me got|ena cyn|ing : god|e doht|e  
 Se|me beag| forgeaf : burg|-waren|a frum|a  
 On<sup>3</sup>|tham siex | hund wæs : smæt|es<sup>4</sup> gold|es  
 Gescyr|ed sceat|ta : scil|ling-rim|e  
 Thon|e ic ead|gilse : on æht | seal|de  
 Min|um hleo|-drihtne : tha | ic to ham | bicwom  
 Leof|um to lean|e : thæs | the he | me lond | forgeaf|  
 Mi|nes fæder eth|el : frea | myr|ginga .

And me|tha ealh|hild : oth|erne | forgeaf|  
 Dryht|-cwen dug|uthe : doh|tor ead|wines

Hyr|e lof | leng|de : geond lond|a fel|a  
 Thonn | ic be song|e : sec|gan sceol|de  
 Hwær | ic un|der swegl : sel|ast wis|se  
 Gold|-hroden|e cwen : gief|e bryt|tian .  
 Thonn | wit scil|ling : scir|an reor|de  
 For un|crum sig|e-driht|ne : song | ahof|an

<sup>1</sup> A metrical point. [Read *iudeum*, i.e. Jews.—W. W. S.]

<sup>2</sup> These verses run very awkwardly. Mr. Kemble divides them differently, but I think not satisfactorily.

<sup>3</sup> No doubt the Estii of Tacitus, the men of modern East-land (Esthonia).

<sup>4</sup> *Thrag* A. S. a period of time—a throw.

down himself he laid,

Upon the grassy ground to sleep a *throw*.

F. Q. 3. 4. 53.

<sup>5</sup> It appears that the preposition before a pronoun took the accent, so, at this day, we say on | *it*, on | *him*, &c.

<sup>6</sup> The proper meaning of *smæt* is by no means clear.

<sup>7</sup> This passage is obscure. The shilling (*scilling*) was a coin worth twenty shots (*sceatas*). Now *scilling* has been derived from the verb *scyllan*, to divide, and the German *scheide-münze*, small change, clearly comes from *scheid-en* to divide. It is likely, that the custom (which I believe still prevails in America) of actually dividing the larger coins, was known at this period to the Goths. If so, we see the propriety of the phrase *geacyrd*, shorn off. It should, however, be noticed that *geacyrd* may be rendered by the word *given*.

The precise meaning of *scilling-rim*, shilling-tale, I do not know. Mr. Kemble. I observe, makes it two distinct words. The word shot, *sceat*, is still in daily use among our sailors; its *primitive* meaning was a *part*, a *portion*.

<sup>8</sup> *Liefe* was a term of respect often addressed by inferiors to their Lord or Lady. When Melissa discovers Pastorel, and runs to inform her mistress,

With the Ebree, and with the Indee, and with the Egypte,  
 With the Moids I was, and with the Perse, and with the Myrgings, and  
     with the Mofdings,  
 And again with the Myrgings, and with the Amothings,  
 And with the East-Thyrings I was, and with the Eols, and with the  
     Iste,<sup>6</sup> and with the Idumings.

And I was with Eorman-ric a whole throw ;<sup>4</sup>  
 There me the Gotens' king with largess blest ;  
 He me a beigh gave—chief of the burgh-men !  
 For it were shorn off, of beaten gold,  
 Six hundred shots, in shilling-tale ;<sup>7</sup>  
 That, for a possession, gave I to Eadgils,  
 My guardian-Lord (when home I came)  
 For my Liefes<sup>8</sup> meed ; for that land he gave me,  
 My father's native seat<sup>9</sup>—Lord of the Myrgings !

And me then Ealh-hild another gave—  
 Lady-queen of the nobles ! daughter of Eadwine !

Her praise I spread through many lands,  
 When I in song had to say,  
 Where best, under Heaven, I knew  
 (Gold-clad queen gifts to bestow ;  
 When we two,<sup>10</sup> (the shilling at feast to share)  
 'Fore our conqu'ring lord the song uplifted,

*My Liefe, said she, ye know that long ygo,  
 Whilst ye in durance dwelt, ye to me gave  
 A little maid—*

*F. Q. 6. 12. 17.*

<sup>6</sup> In this curious passage we see the lord taking his fine upon renewal of the feud. We see also, even at this early period, a strong tendency towards hereditary descent ; for the gleeman succeeded not to his father's land, but to his fathers *ethel*, or native soil. There must have been three generations in possession at the least.

The passage shows that the Traveller was a landholder ; but he still may have been of low condition, for the *folc-land* or public demesne was held by freemen of all ranks ; the *boc-land*, or allodium was chiefly in the hands of the great nobles.

<sup>10</sup> This is another puzzling passage. We might get a better construction if we divided the lines thus

*Thonn wit scilling sciran*

*Reorde for uncerum sige drihtne : song ahofan—*

—but then we should miss *one* section, and have *another* containing four accents, which is contrary to the usual rhythm of the poem. This passage confirms what many circumstances would lead us to conjecture, that the gleemen sung in *pairs*—one probably answering the other. [*Wit Scilling* means 'I and Scilling' ; *sciran reorde*, 'with clear voice.'—W. W. S.]

Hlud|e bi hearp|an : hleoþ|or swin|sade .

Thonn mon|ige men|: mod|um wlon|ce

Word|um sprec|an : tha|the wel|cuthan

Thæt|hi næf|re song|: sel|lan ne hyrd|on .

Thon|an ic eal|ne geond-hwearf|: eth|el got|ena

Soh|te ic & sith|a<sup>2</sup> : tha sel|estan|

Thæt|wæs inn|-weorud : eor|man-ric|es

Heth|can soht|e ic and beade|can : and her|eling|as .

Em|ercan soht|e ic and fridl|an : ond east|-gotan|

Frod|ne and god|ne : fæd|er un|wenes .

Sec|can soh|te ic and bec|can : seaf|olan|and theod|ric .

Heath|oric| . and sif|ecan : hlith|e and inc|gentheow .

Ead|wine soh|te ic and el|san : eg|elmund|and hung|ar

And|tha wlon|can gedryht|: with|-myrging|a .

Wulf|-here soh|te ic and wurm|-here : ful oft|thær wig|ne alæg .

Thon|ne bread|a her|e : heard|um sweord|um

Ymb wist|lá-wud|u : werg|an sceold|on

Eald|ne eth|el-stol : æt|lan leod|um

Ræd|-here soh|te ic and rond|-here : rum|stan and gisl|-here

With|ergield| . and freoth|eric : wud|gan and ham|an .

Ne wær|on thæt<sup>3</sup>|ge-sith|a : tha sæm|estan|

Theah|the ic hy|& nihst : nem|nan sceold|e

Ful oft|of tham heap|e : hwin|ende<sup>4</sup> fleag

Giel|lende gar|: on grom|e theod|e.

Wræc|can thær weold|an : wund|nan gold|e

Wer|um and wif|um<sup>11</sup> : wud|ga and ham|a

Swa|ic thæt sym|le onfond<sup>11</sup> : on thær|e fer|inge

Thæt se|bith leof|ast : lond|-buend|um

<sup>1</sup> A little flock, but well my pipe they *couth*.

*Sidney.*

<sup>2</sup> The construction here is not an easy one.

<sup>3</sup> Names of individuals I have given unaltered from the Saxon, but names of races I have endeavoured to reduce to the modern standard of our language—thus the Saxon *Gota* is represented by *Got*, for the final vowel disappeared during the progress of the 15th century. To this rule, however, I have made one exception. The final *e* has been retained, and I have written *Eagle*, *Sneft*, &c., as did the Saxons. Were we to discard the *e*, we should find it very difficult to distinguish the singular from the plural.

<sup>4</sup> Mr. Kemble writes this compound as two words. But in the first place, from such a reading I can extract no satisfactory meaning; and secondly, the prosody requires *with* to be an accented syllable. A sectional pause never occurs immediately between a preposition and its substantive. As we know not the position of the Myrings, we cannot hope to fix that of the *With-Myrings*. [See p. 378, l. 4, and the note.—W. W. S.]

<sup>5</sup> Can these *Hreads* be the same as the *Hreth-Goten* above mentioned? Or the *Harudes*, allies of Ariovistus in his invasion of Gaul; Cæs. 1. 51.

And loud to the harp the voice resounded ;  
 When many men, proud of soul,  
 Said in words (they that couth<sup>1</sup> well)  
 That they never better song heard.

Thence I turn'd me through all the Gotens country  
 Sought I, at all times, the noblest—  
 Them that were the household of Eormanric.

Hethca sought I, and Beadeca, and the Herelings ;  
 Emerca sought I, and Fridla ; and the East-Got,<sup>3</sup>  
 The wise and good father of Unwen ;  
 Secca sought I, and Becca, Seafola, and Theodric,  
 Heathoric and Sifeca, Hliithe and Inc-gentheow ;  
 Eadwine sought I, and Elsa, Egelmund and Hungar,  
 And the proud Lord of the With-Myrgings,<sup>4</sup>  
 Wulfhere sought I, and Wyrnhere—there oft war ceased not,  
 Then the Hreads<sup>5</sup> army, with hard swords,  
 'Round Wistla<sup>6</sup>-wood, had to guard  
 Their old native soil from Ætla's bands.

Ræd-here sought I, and Rond-here, Rum-stan and Gisl-here,  
 Withergield and Freotheric, Wudga and Hama<sup>7</sup>—  
 Nor were these of comrades the least worthy,  
 Though them I last must name.

Full oft from that troop whistling flew  
 The hissing dart, 'mongst the grim band ;<sup>10</sup>  
 Exiles, there they sway'd, by aid of the twisted gold  
 Both men and women—Wudga and Hama !<sup>12</sup>

So this I ever found, in these wanderings,  
 That *he* is dearest to the people,

<sup>6</sup> The wood of the Vistula.

<sup>7</sup> This is doubtless the Ammius mentioned in note 6, p. 374. He long flourished in the Gothic "myths," as the general of Eormanric.

<sup>8</sup> As to this use of the neuter pronoun see the Confessor's Death-Song, note 14, p. 367.

<sup>9</sup> The A. S. *hrin-an* appears to be the same verb as the Icelandic *hrína*, to make a noise like the wind or the sea.

<sup>10</sup> That is, the Huns.

<sup>11</sup> A metrical point.

<sup>12</sup> This passage may perhaps admit of the following paraphrase. "Though driven from their native seats, in Pannonia or Hungary, by the Huns, still these chiefs kept their people together by their largesses, and made head against the invaders on the Vistula." The East-Goten did not yield to the Huns, till nearly 60 years afterwards. Their subjection lasted only during Ætla's life.

Se|the him god | sylēth : gum|ēna ric|ē  
 To|geheal|denne : thend|ēn he her | leofath .

Swa scrith|ende| : gesceap|um hweorf|ath  
 Gleo|-men gum|ēna : geond grund|a fel|a  
 Thearf|ē secg|ath : thonc|-word sprec|ath  
 Sym|le suth | oththe north| : sum|ne gemet|ath  
 Gyd|da gleaw|ne : geof|um un|hneawne  
 Se|the for|ē dug|uthe : wil|ē dóm | árær|an  
 Eorl|-scipe æf|nan

Oth|that eal | scæceth  
 Leoht | and lif | somod : lof | se ge-wyroeth |  
 Haf|ath un|der heof|onum : heah|-fæstne dóm|.

We have now before us, specimens of almost all the Anglo-Saxon poems, whose dates are known. In giving these extracts, it has been my first wish to deal fairly with the reader; and in all cases to lay the text before him, such as it was found in the manuscript.<sup>1</sup> He is thus enabled to form his own judgment, and (when necessary) to correct *my* errors. I am, however, fully alive to the advantages, that have been relinquished. A slight change of the dot, or the insertion of a few asterisks,<sup>2</sup> would, in many cases, have been most convenient. If the text were not bettered, the reader might at least have been baffled, and the blunders of translation secured from criticism.

The merit of a faithful *text* is claimed with some degree of confidence; that of a faithful *version*, I dare only say, I have done my best to deserve. But no attempt has

<sup>1</sup> The reader will remember the cautions given him in p. 312, n. 3. In the *Song of the Traveller*, however, and in the *Riming Poem*, which will be given in the third chapter, I have not taken even the liberties there mentioned; but have followed the MS. even where it seemed inconsistent with itself. The slightest alteration required more confidence than I could pretend to in the midst of so much difficulty.

Almost every early MS. has some peculiarities in the mode of writing, which are, of course, familiar to those who have *studied* it, and easily distinguished from casual blunders. No editor will do his duty who neglects to notice them; but the same scrupulous exactness will hardly be expected from one, who consults the MS. for the sake of an extract.

<sup>2</sup> A line of asterisks, or a dash, is frequently used to show a defect in the manuscript—real, or *suspected*. This is a common, but most indefensible practice.

Who gives them wealth—men's government  
To hold, while here he liveth.

Thus wandering, at men's bidding  
The Gleemen turn them o'er many lands ;  
Their need they tell—thanks they render ;  
Always, south or north, some one they meet with,  
(Skill'd in songs—free in gifts)  
That, 'fore the nobles, would rear his sway,  
And earlship stablish.

Till all fitteth,  
(Light and life together) he that gets him praise,  
Hath under heav'n exalted sway!

---

been made at *concealment*; the translation, whether right or wrong, is never, I trust, so literal as to be unintelligible, nor so loose as to leave in doubt the construction, which has been put upon the original. The difficulties of the subject have been, at least, *honestly* met; if sometimes unsuccessfully—the failure will not, it is hoped, be visited with any very great severity. Upon the reader's indulgence I must throw myself.



## CHAPTER III.

## SECTIONAL METRE,

or that which results from making each section a distinct verse, most probably owed its origin to the middle rime. Like sounds, recurring at definite intervals, very quickly strike the ear; and when they *regularly* close the section, the division of the couplet becomes the more marked, and its sections are soon looked upon, for all practical purposes, as distinct verses.

Middle rime is found in Anglo-Saxon poems of the tenth, and, it may be, even of the ninth century. The riming couplet, for the most part, occurs singly; but sometimes the middle rime runs through a whole passage. There is, however, but one Anglo-Saxon poem, as yet discovered, into whose rhythm it enters as an *essential* characteristic.

I would willingly pass over this poem altogether, were not its rhythm so singular, as almost to *force* it upon our notice. The writer, who aims at scientific arrangement, must choose his subjects not as inclination leads him but as rule prescribes. In the stead of those which might generally interest, or whose scope and tendency he has fully mastered, he must sometimes take such as are imperfectly understood, or of very partial interest, or of trivial import. All these objections may be made to the introduction of the following poem; but it fills too large a place in the history of our rhythms to be left unnoticed, and its peculiarities are so intricate and varied, that a slight notice would be any thing but satisfactory.

---

Me lif|es onlah|: se|this leoht| onwrah|  
 And |thæt torh|te geteoh|: til|lice| onwrah|

---

<sup>1</sup> Whatever were the defects of this version, the remarks which preface it must disarm criticism.

"Conybeare's riming poem," as it has been called, is found in the Exeter MS. and presents such difficulties to the translator, that the scholar, whose name it bears, would not attempt an English version. His editor, however, has given a translation, which Rask commends as a "meritorious attempt."<sup>1</sup> The last-named critic himself has risked the translation of a couplet, and would fain account for the difficulties of the poem on the score of *dialect*. Other reasons might have been given, and I think with greater candour. I see few marks of dialect, which may not be found in the works of Cædmon or of Alfred. Peculiarities of construction are rare; and even the words whose meanings are unknown, are generally formed according to well-known analogies. They are not, however, met with in the narrow round of Anglo-Saxon scholarship; and the abrupt and broken style of the poem, which is made up, as it were, of shreds and patches, seldom enables us to guess the meaning of a word from its connexion with the context.

As the reader might naturally wish to know for what kind of sentiments a rhythm so singular has been chosen, I have ventured to offer a translation, however imperfect. In many cases the meaning given to the text is mere conjecture; and where the reasons for the conjecture were not obvious, or such as could not be suggested in a few words, the sentence has been left a blank. As we perfect our vocabulary these difficulties will vanish; it would be waste of time to *dwell* upon uncertainties, when a single passage, luckily hit upon, might decide the question.

Who the minstrel-king may be, who thus contrasts the evils of exile with days of bygone happiness, will be left for the reader to determine.<sup>2</sup>

---

In me life kindled he, who this light reveal'd,<sup>3</sup>  
And that brightly he brought forth, bounteously he reveal'd.

---

<sup>2</sup> [Mr. Thorpe thinks that the poem is a paraphrase of Job, chapters xxix. and xxx., which see.—W. W. S.]

<sup>3</sup> The meaning of this passage seems to be—"He that made *me*, created light, and showered his bounty alike on *both* creations."

Glæd | wæs ic gliw | um : gleng | ed hiw | um  
Blis | sa bleo | um : blost | ma hiw | um.

Secg | as mec seg | on : sym | bel ne | aleg | on<sup>1</sup>  
Feorh | -giefe | gefeg | on : fræt | wed wæg | um

Wic | ofer wong | um : wen | nan<sup>2</sup> gong | um  
Lis | se mid long | um : leom | a getong | um

Tha | wæs wæst | mum aweaht | : world | -onspreht |<sup>3</sup>  
Un | der rod | erum | areaht | : ræd | -mægne of | er-theaht |<sup>4</sup>

Giest | as geng | don : ger | scipe<sup>5</sup> meng | don  
Lis | se leng | don : lust | um gleng | don.

Scrif | en scrad | glad | : thurh | gescad | inbrad |  
Wæs | on lag | u-stream | e lad | : thær | me leoth | u<sup>6</sup> ne | biglad |

Hæf | de ic hean | ne hād | : ne | wæs me | in heal | le gād |.  
Thæt | thær rof | -weord rād | : oft | thær rinc | ge-bād |

Thæt | he in sel | e sæg | e : sinc | ge-wæg | e .  
Thegn | um gethyht | e : thend | en wæs | ic mæg | en .

Horse | e mec her | edon : hild | e gener | edon  
Fæg | re fer | edon : feond | on biwer | edon .

Swa | mec hyht | -giefu heold | : hyg | e dryht | befeold |.  
Stath | ol æht | um steald | : step | e-geng | um weold |

Swylc | e eorth | e ol | : aht | e ic eal | dor-stol |  
Gald | or-word | um gol | : gom | el-sib | be ne | of-oll<sup>7</sup>

Ac wæs gefest gear : gellende snær  
Wun | iend | o wær | wil | -bec besær |

Scealc | as wær | on scearp | e : scyl | wæs hearp | e<sup>8</sup>

Hlud | e hlyn | ede : hleoth | or dyn | ede

Swegl | -rād swin | sade : swith | e ne mins | ade

Burg | -sele beof | ode : beorht | hlif | ade

El | len eac | nade : ead | beac | nade

Fre | aum frod | ade<sup>9</sup> : from | um god | ade .

Mód | mæg | nade : min | e<sup>10</sup> fæg | nade .

Treow | tel | gade<sup>11</sup> : tír | welgade<sup>12</sup>

Blæ'd | blis | sade : .....<sup>13</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Alegon* seems to be the plural of *aleak*—as *gefegon* of *gefeak*, and *segon* of *sah*. [Pt. t. pl. of *ālicgan*; "feasts failed not."—W. W. S.]

<sup>2</sup> *Wennan*, the same as *winnan*?

<sup>3</sup> *Aansprek-en*, Du. to converse with.

<sup>4</sup> *Overdenk-en*, Du. to reflect.

<sup>5</sup> Is not this word connected with the Icelandic *gar*, a joke, a quiz?

<sup>6</sup> The same as *lætho*?

Glad was I with glees, adorn'd with hues —  
With the colours of bliss, with the hues of the blossoms.

Men look'd on me—the feast they fail'd not ;  
In life's gift they joy'd—in ornamented paths—

A mansion o'er the fields, to win in their journeys,  
With long pleasure—a light for the prostrate.

Then by abundance was awak'd worldly converse—  
Under heav'n uprais'd, by strength of counsel, reflection.

Guests came—jokes they mingled ;  
They lengthen'd out the pleasure—with joys adorn'd me.

[The rapid ship glided through a channel into the expanse ?]  
On the sea-stream was journeying—there injury came not past me.

Lofty state I held ; no trouble was in my hall,  
For that there a high-wield sat ; hero there oft abode—

That in hall he might see a weight of silver,  
And to the Thanes quaff—whilst potentate I was.

Nobly they heried me ; in battle rescued me ;  
Fairly escorted me ; from enemies guarded me

So me hope's gift possest ; heart the Lord enwapt ;  
Seat with wealth he stablish'd ; step-goings he directed.

Also earth brought forth ; held I princely throne ;  
In magic words I sung ; nor from old kindred fell.

[But there was boisterous mirth, and resounding harp-string ;  
Concord of the inmates precluded lamentation ?]

My servants were sharp ; a crowd was round the harp ;  
Loud it resounded ; the strain re-echoed ;  
Heaven's course sung ; nor ceas'd its loudness ;  
The burgh-hall trembled ; bright it glitter'd ;  
Wax'd high confidence ; happiness beacon'd ;  
Lords it befriended ; brave men assisted ;  
The heart was strengthened ; the thought exulted ;  
The tree branch'd forth ; glory abounded ;  
Fruit bless'd us ; .....<sup>13</sup>

<sup>7</sup> *Of-oll*, the same as *offeal*, or rather *afeal*?

<sup>8</sup> *Scyll*, the same as *sceol*? ["The harp was shrill."—W. W. S.]

<sup>9</sup> *Frodade*, another form for *freothode*?

<sup>10</sup> *Miani*, Icel. ; the thought, the memory.

<sup>11</sup> A verb formed from *telga*?

<sup>12</sup> A verb formed from *welig*?

<sup>13</sup> Here a section seems missing.

Gold | ger | wade<sup>1</sup> : gim | hwearf | ade .  
 Sinc | sear | wade<sup>2</sup> : sib | near | wade

From | ic wæs | in fræt | wum : freo | lic in geat | wum .  
 Wæs | min dream | dryht | lic : droht | ath hyht | lic  
 Fold | an ic freoth | ode : folc | um ic leoth | ode .

Lif | wæs min long | e : leod | um in | ge-mong | e  
 Tir | um ge-tong | e : teal | a gehong | e.

Nu | min hreth | er is hreoh | : heow | -sithum sceoh |<sup>3</sup>  
 Nyd | -bysgum neah | : gewit | eth niht | es infleah |<sup>4</sup>

Se ær | in dæg | e was dyr | e : scrith | ed nu | deop fyr |

Brond | -hord geblow | en : breost | um in | for-grow | en  
 Flyht | um to-flow | en : flah<sup>4</sup> | is geblow | en.

Mic | lum in | gemyn | de : mod | es gecyn | de  
 Gret | eth ungryn | de : grorn | efen pyn | de . [or wynde.]

Beal | o fus byrn | eth : bit | tre to-yrn | eth.

Wer | ig win | neth : wid | -sith ongin | neth.

Sár | ne sin | nith : sorg | um cin | nith

Blæd | his blin | nith : blis | se lin | nath

Lis | tum lin | neth : lus | tum ne tin | neth.

Dream | as swa her | gedreos | ath : dryht | -scype |<sup>6</sup> gehreos | ath.  
 Lif | her men | forleos | ath : leah | tras oft | geceos | ath

Treow | thrag is | to trag |<sup>1</sup> seo | untrum | e genag |  
 Steap | um eat | ole | misthah : ond | eal stund | genag | .

Swa | nu world | wend | eth : wyrd | e send | eth  
 And het | es hent | eth : hæl | ethe scynd | eth

Wen | cyn<sup>7</sup> ge-wit | eth : wæl-gár slit | eth  
 Flah | -mah flit | eth : flan | -mon hwit | eth  
 Burg | -sorg bit | eth : bald | -ald thwit | eth  
 Wræc | -fæc writh | ath : wráth | -áth smit | eth  
 Sin | grynd sid | ath<sup>8</sup> : sæc | ra<sup>9</sup> fear | o glid | eth

Grom | torn græf | eth : græft | haf | ath.

<sup>1</sup> A metrical point. [Grein has *gearwade*.]

<sup>2</sup> The substantive *searo* means a war-machine, a means of defence; may not this meaning have passed to the verb? A metrical point follows *searwade*.

<sup>3</sup> Same as *sceoc*? [Rather, *sceoh* is shy, fearful.—W. W. S.]

<sup>4</sup> See *flyg*, or *flyh*, Cæd. fol. 215; and also *flug*, Icel.

Gold deck'd me ; gems flew round me ;  
Wealth made a bulwark ; kinsmen clos'd around me.

Brave was I in ornaments, comely in attire.  
My joy was lordly, sojourn joyous.  
The land I befriended, to the people I sung.

Life was mine long-while, among men,  
On glories reclining, nobly supported.

*Now* my mind is disturb'd, from colour'd paths 'tis fled—  
With pressing cares beset, by night,<sup>4</sup> into exile it wendeth.

Who erst in day was dear, shroudeth *now* deep fire !

The brand-heap is full blown, o'er his breast 'tis spread—  
By wand'rings brought low, his vagabond lot is full blown.

Bale quickly burneth ; bitterly it o'ertaketh him.

Enemy warreth ; wide wand'ring beginneth.  
Affliction showeth no favour, with sorrows it is pregnant ;  
His happiness endeth ; his joys cease ;

So here fall pleasures ; lordships sink ;  
Life here men lose ; and sins oft choose.

So now the world changeth ; fate it sendeth ;  
And hate it followeth ; upon man it rusheth.

Hope's offspring flitteth ; the death-dart pierceth,  
The archer fighteth ; the javelin-man ..... ?  
The borough-grief biteth ; bold eld..... ?  
The vengeance-hour flourisheth ; the anger-oath smiteth :  
Sin's foundation departeth ; the snare-path glideth away.

<sup>1</sup> That is, the night of adversity.

<sup>2</sup> Here *dryht-scipe* seems to be taken in a collective sense. See p. 319.

<sup>7</sup> In the MS. *wencyn* and *ge* are united, *wencynge*.

<sup>8</sup> Same as *sithath* !

<sup>9</sup> Conybeare suggests *searo* for *sæcra*. By this substitution we preserve the sectional rime.

Sear|o-hwit solath : sum|ur-hat col|ath  
 Fold|-wela feall|eth : teon|-scipe weal|leth  
 Eorth|-mægen eal|dath : el|len col|ath.  
 Me | thæt wyrd | gewæf| : and | gehwyrð | forgeaf|  
 Thæt | ic grof|e græf| : and | thæt grim|me græf|  
 Fle|an flæs|ce ne mæg| : thonne flan<sup>2</sup> | hred dæg|  
 Nyd | grapum nim|eth : thonn|e seo neah | be-cym|eth  
 Seo | me eth|les ónfónn<sup>3</sup> : and | mec her heard|es ón-cónn|.

Thon|ne lich|oma lig|eth : lim|a wyrn frit|eth  
 Ac | him wen|ne<sup>4</sup> ge-wig|eth : and | tha wist | gethyg|eth  
 Oth|thæt beoth | tha bán án| : and | set nyh|stan nán|.

Nefne se neda tan balawun her ge-hlotene  
 Ne bith se hlisa adroren  
 Ær|thæt ead|ig gethenc|eth : he hin|e the of|tor swenc|eth  
 Byrg|eth him | tha bit|ran syn|ne : hog|ath to thær|e bet ran  
 wyn|ne  
 Gemon | morth|a liss|e : her sind|on milt|sa blias|e  
 Hyt|lice | in heof|ona . ric|e : ut|on nú hal|gum gelic|e  
 Scyl|dum biscyr|ede : scyn|dan gener|ede  
 Wom|mum biwer|ede : wul|dre gener|ede.  
 Thær mon|-cyn mot| : for meot|ude rot|.

Soth|ne god | gese|on : and áa | in sib|be gefe|an.

From this poem we learn, that the singular artificial rhythms, whose rules form so large a portion of Icelandic prosody, were known to our poets, at least *in genere*, as early as the close of the tenth century. There is every reason to believe them of native growth, and that we have here a very early specimen of their peculiarities.

<sup>1</sup> Nes non so hot, that hit ne colath,  
 Nes non so hwit that hit ne solath.

*Hule and Niztengale*, l. 1265.

<sup>2</sup> *Flan* appears to be the past tense of some verb, answering to the Icelandic *flana*, to rush headlong. [Grein has *flán-hred*, i.e. arrow-swift.—W. W. S.]

<sup>3</sup> Same as *onfeng*?

<sup>4</sup> In the MS. *wenne* and *ge* are joined together—*wennege*. Lye gives as *wyrn* with the interpretation, a *species of worm*. *Wenne* may be some connected word.

Treacherous white soileth ; summer heat cooleth ;<sup>1</sup>  
 World's weal falleth ; strife upwelleth ;  
 Earth's might ageeth ; courage cooleth.

This for me wove my wierd ; and as my lot it gave me,  
 That I should dig my grave ; and the grim grave to fly,

To flesh is not given, when the swift day is gone.

Fate in her gripe seizeth, when nigh she cometh.

She from country took me, and here with hardship tried me.

When the carcase lieth, limbs the worm eateth ;  
 But with him . . . . . ? warreth, and the feast partaketh,

Till there be bone alone, and at last be none.

....., the offer himself he afflicteth ;

He avoideth the bitter sin ; after the better joy he yearneth ;

He rememb'reth of crimes the pardon. Here are mercies in bliss,

Aloft in heaven's realm ! May we now, like the saints,

From sins all cleansed, approach it<sup>6</sup>—redeemed !

From every stain safe-guarded ! with glory redeemed !

There mote mankind, 'fore their Maker exulting,

The true God see, and aye in peace rejoice.

We do not indeed find the stanzas of eight verses, or the verses of three and four syllables, these are probably the invention of a later age ; but the artificial flow of the rhythm, and the rime, both final and sectional, may be found alike in the Icelandic metres and in the poem before us.<sup>7</sup> The different varieties of rhythm were not, however,

<sup>5</sup> This couplet is probably corrupt, for the alliteration is disturbed. In the lines that follow I can trace neither rime nor alliteration ; and they seem equally destitute of meaning. This gap throws some doubt on the construction of the next perfect line.

<sup>6</sup> That is, heaven.

<sup>7</sup> Of the same kind was probably the *Aldicht* of the Flemings ; Mone, 27.

Voord zijt niet moe,  
 hoord zwijgt siet toe.



as yet separated; nor were the pauses, as yet, subjected to the rime; we still find the stops falling in the midst of a couplet.

We may trace through our early literature a series of poems written with short, abrupt, and artificial rhythms of two or three accents, and for the most part devoted to whim, satire, or ridicule. I cannot help thinking that these rhythms, though certainly foreign in their origin, were strongly influenced by the peculiarities of the metre we are now considering. The sections 2 and 6 very fre-

The shup | pare that | huem shup | te : to shom | e he huem shad | de  
To fles | ant to fley | e : to tyk | e and to tad | de  
So | seyth rom | aunz : whos | e ryht rad | de  
Floh | com of flor | e : ant lous | com of lad | de, &c.

Nou | beth cap | el-claw | eres<sup>1</sup> : with shom | e to-shrud | e  
Hue bus | keth huem | wyth bot | ouns : as | e hit wer | e a brud | e  
With low | e lac | ede shon | : of | an hayf | re hud | e  
Hu pik | eth of her | e prov | endre : al huer | e prud | e,<sup>2</sup> &c. &c.

The "short measures" of Skelton, so popular with the lower classes at the beginning of the sixteenth century, may perhaps be looked upon the *direct* descendants of the Anglo-Saxon rhythms, though it must be confessed they

He frown   eth ev   er,	No alepe   can him catche   ,
He laugh   eth nev   er,	But ev   er doth watche   ;
Ev   en, nor mor   owe ;	He is   so bete
But oth   er men   nes sor   owe	Wyth mal   ice and hete   ,
Caus   eth him   to grin   ,	Wyth ang   er and yre   .
And   reioyce   therein   .	His foule   desyre

Skelton's metre not unfrequently reminds one of the loose but quaint rhythm of the Minnelieder; and it is far from unlikely that both may belong to the same parent

<sup>1</sup> *Capel-claweres*, that is, horse-carriers, or grooms.

<sup>2</sup> [Printed in *Political Songs*, ed. Wright, pp. 238, 239; also in Bödtker's edition of MS. Harl. 2253, pp. 136, 137.—W. W. S.]

quently occur, and we often find a strong tendency towards the sectional rime. I will give a short extract from a satire, probably of the thirteenth century. It is found in the Harl. MS. 2253; and was directed against the insolent menials—the grooms, pages, and “boyes with boste,”—who always, in that age of show and splendour, accompanied the great. The rime is only found at the end of the couplet, but through a large portion of the poem the sections are written in separate lines, as though they formed distinct verses.

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The Maker that made them, to shame he consign'd them,  
To fleas and to fly, to tike and to [toad]<sup>3</sup>  
So saith Romance, whoso reads rightly—  
Flea came from floor, and louse came from lad, &c.

Now be capul-clawes y-clad to their shame;  
They busk them with buttons, as though t'were a bride,  
With low-laced shoon of a [heifer's]<sup>4</sup> hide;  
They pick from their provender all their pride! &c. &c.

---

much resemble, in their flow, the *lais* and *virelais* of the fifteenth century. His description of Envy is a favourable specimen. [It occurs in Phyllyp Sparowe, 922.]

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Wyl suff|re no slepe|  
In his head | to crepe|.   
His foule | semblaunt|  
Al dis|plesaunte|,  
Whan oth|er ar glad|,  
Than | is he sad|,  
Fran|tyke and mad|;

His tong | never styll|  
For | to saye yll|,  
Wry th|yng and wring|yng,  
Byt|yng and styng|yng;  
And thus | this elf|  
Consum|eth himself|. &c. &c.

---

stock. He thus winds up his abuse of the “vilitissimus Scotus,” Dundas.

Dundas|, that dronke asse|,

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<sup>3</sup> [Dr. Guest has *dadds* for *tadde* in the text, which destroys the alliteration; and he translates *dadds* by “blow.”—W. W. S.]

<sup>4</sup> [Dr. Guest has *hayere* in the text, which he rightly leaves untranslated.—W. W. S.]

That rat|is and rank|is,  
 That prat|is and prank|is  
 On Hunt|ley bank|is,  
 Take this|our thank|is—  
 Dun|de, Dunbar|,  
 Walke Scot|, walke, sot|,  
 Rayle|not to far|.

[See Dyce's edition, i. 194.]

Poor Jonson's letter to "Master John Burgess" will probably recur to the reader's memory—what Englishman can read it and not feel humbled?

Fa ther John Bur gess,	He lov'd the Mus ea,
Necess itie ur ges	Though now he refus'es
My wo full crie	To take apprehen sion
To Sir Rob ert Pie ;	Of a year's pen sion.
And that he will ven ter,	And more is behind , &c. &c.
To send my <i>deben</i>  ter.	[Underwoods, 75.]
Tell him, his Ben	
Knew the time when	

Cowper also has trifled, very amusingly, with this jingle.

The sectional metres, which succeeded to the *older* Anglo-Saxon rhythms, differ in several respects from those we have been last considering. Layamon affords us an early, and, at the same time, a very curious specimen of their peculiarities. His history was probably written during the latter half of the twelfth century, though the MS.,<sup>1</sup> which contains it, is of later date, probably later than the reign of John. It is written continuously like Anglo-Saxon verse; but the frequency of the middle rime, and the subjection of the middle pause to the final, are peculiarities, which strongly characterise the early sectional metres of our Old English dialect.

Before we examine Layamon's metre, it may be well to take some notice of his dialect; and as this presents many difficulties, we will clear the way by first making some general observations on the history of our language.

The Anglo-Saxons had three vowel-endings, *a*, *e*, and *u*,

<sup>1</sup> Calig. A. ix. There are also extant the fragments of a later copy. *Utho*, C. xiii.

to distinguish the cases of the noun, and the different conjugations of the verb. In the Old English all these vowel-endings were represented by the final *e*; and the loss of the final *e* is the characteristic mark of our modern dialect. It is obvious that either of these changes must have brought with it a new language. The confusion of the vowels, or the loss of the final *e*, was a confounding of tense and person, of case and number; in short, of those grammatical forms to which language owes its precision and its clearness. Other forms were to be sought for, before our tongue could again serve the purposes of science or of literature.

The oldest of the Gothic tongues, the Anglo-Saxon and the Mæso-Gothic, must take their place with the nobler and the purer languages, with the Greek, the Latin, and the Sanscrit. The causes, which in the twelfth century gave birth to the Old English, worked nearly at the same time a like change in all the kindred dialects, save the most northerly, which, safe from their influence amid the snows of Iceland and of Sweden, long retained (and indeed still retain) many of the earliest features of our language. The Old English runs side by side with the later German dialects, and the change it underwent in the fifteenth century would doubtless have been *theirs* also, but for an event which no one could have foreseen, and whose consequences even the experience of four centuries has not enabled us to calculate. As it is, our modern dialect stands alone.

A difference is always to be found between the written and the spoken language of a people. The look, the tone, the action, are means of expression which the speaker may employ, and the writer cannot; to make himself understood, the latter must use language more precise and definite than the former. There is also another reason for this difference. When a language has no written literature, it is ever subject to change of pronunciation, and so determinate is the *direction* of these changes, that it may be marked out between limits much narrower than any one has yet ventured to lay down. But with a written literature a new element enters into the calculation. A standard for composition now exists, which the writer will naturally prefer to the varying dialect

of the people, and, as far as he safely may, will do his best to follow. In this way the written and the spoken languages will act and react upon each other; and it must depend upon the value of the literature and the reading habits of the people, which of them shall at last prevail.

As to Anglo-Saxon literature, scanty as are the relics which have been left us, enough remains to show its beauty and its worth; and vainly shall we search our annals for any thing its equal,<sup>1</sup> till we come to the gifted men who immortalized the era of Elizabeth. Taught in the monastery, and *fixed* in the literature of the country, the forms of Anglo-Saxon grammar remained without a change for centuries. Local dialects there certainly were, and the dialect of the poet varied from that of the prose writer; but no changes have been yet pointed out, which can fairly be considered as owing to the mere lapse of time. Oversights are, however, sometimes met with in the carelessly written MSS. of the eleventh century, which show that, although the written language might be fixed, the popular dialect was still following out its natural tendencies. The language of our earlier literature fell at last a victim, not to the Norman Conquest, for it survived that event at least a century—not to the foreign jargon which the weak but well-meaning Edward first brought into the country, for French did not *mix* with our language till the days of Chaucer—it fell before the same deep and mighty influences, which swept every living language from the literature of Europe.

When the south regained its ascendancy, and Rome once more seized the wealth of vassal provinces, its favourite priests had neither the knowledge requisite to understand, nor tastes fitted to enjoy, the literature of the countries into which they were promoted. The road to their favour and their patronage lay elsewhere; and the monk, giving up his mother-tongue as worthless, began to pride himself only upon his Latinity. The legends of his patron saint he Latinized, the story of his monastery he Latinized; in Latin

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<sup>1</sup> I do not forget Chaucer and Langland (if Langland be the name); but two men of genius do not make a literature.

he wrote history, in Latin he wrote satires and romances. Amid these labours, he had little time to study the niceties of Anglo-Saxon grammar, and the Homilies, the English Scriptures, Cædmon's Paraphrase, the national songs, the magnificent Judith, and other treasures of native genius, must soon have lain on the shelves of his cloister as little read, or, if read, almost as little understood<sup>1</sup> as if they had been written in a foreign tongue. When he addressed himself to the unlearned, noble<sup>2</sup> or ignoble, he used the vulgar dialect of his shire, with its idioms, which the written language had probably rejected as wanting in precision, and with its corrupt pronunciation, which alone would require new forms of grammar. In this way, many specimens of our old English dialects have been handed down to us; and these, however widely they differ from each other, agree in one particular—in confounding the characteristic endings of the Anglo-Saxon.

For want of a standard literature none of these dialects could *fix* its grammar. Every century brought with it fresh changes; and the student, who sits down to Robert of Gloucester, will derive but little aid from his previous knowledge of Layamon. In the fourteenth century, the final *e* began to waver;<sup>3</sup> and during the following century our language may be considered as once more in a state of disorganization. It is a singular fact, that several of the other European languages were shortly after threatened with a revolution of the very same nature; when the press came to their aid, and by doubling the influence of their literature put a stop to further changes.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See the version of the Brunanburgh War-song, made or rather attempted by Henry of Huntingdon.

<sup>2</sup> Layamon wrote his history expressly for the *nobles*; and Robert of Brunne "schewed his Inglis" for the "*lordes lewed*."

<sup>3</sup> There are two dates, which, as regards the history of our language, it is important to have fixed—the earliest period when the final *e* became mute, and also the period when it was first used for mere purposes of orthography—to lengthen, for example, the vowel of the preceding syllable. Both these dates will, I think, be found in the fourteenth century; the first near the beginning, the latter probably near the close.

<sup>4</sup> The final *e* is still very commonly dropt in the *boor-speech* of Germany, and even in the classical language there are many traces of the same mutilation.

Hitherto little mention has been made of the Latin or the French. The various ways in which these languages influenced our own, have never yet been clearly traced, and by some writers have been most strangely misunderstood. There are not wanting those, who look upon the English tongue as a mongrel jargon, invented for purposes of intercourse between the Norman and his Saxon serf; a notion which can only be matched by the theory, that was once started as to the origin of the Sanscrit. The Latin and the French deranged the vocabulary of our language, but never its form and structure; and the streams which successively came from these two sources flowed through various channels, and at periods widely separated from each other.

Latin words are found in Anglo-Saxon MSS. of a very early date; especially when the subjects are connected with the economy and discipline of the church. Thus we find *mynster*, a minster, monasterium; *portic*, a porch, porticus; *cluster*, a cloister, claustrum; *munuc*, a monk, monachus; *bisceop*, a bishop, episcopus; *arcebisceop*, an archbishop, archiepiscopus; *sanct*, a saint, sanctus; *profast*, a provost, præpositus; *pæll*, a pall, pallium; *calic*, a chalice, calix; *candel*, a candle, candela; *psalter*, a psalter, psalterium; *mæsse*, a mass, missa; *pistel*, an epistle, epistola; *prædic-ian*, to preach, prædic-are; *prof-ian*, to prove, prob-are, &c. &c. From the Latin also came the names of foreign animals and plants, as *leon*, the lion, leo; *camell*, the camel, camelus; *ylp*, the elephant, elephas; *fic-beam*, the fig-tree, ficus; *fefer-fuge*, the fever-few, febrifugia; *peterselige*, parsley, petroselinum, &c. &c., and of many articles of merchandise the growth or manufacture of distant countries, as *pipor*, pepper, piper; *purpura*, purple, purpura; *pumic-stan*, the pumice-stone, pumex, &c. &c.

Some of these words had to share their honours with English duplicates; but there can be little doubt the greater part had, at a very early period, sunk deeply into the language. They are nearly all *concrete* terms, and are found in almost equal profusion in all the kindred dialects. The *abstract* Latin terms, which begin to show themselves in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, may, I think, be laid to

the account of careless, or rather of pedantic translation.<sup>1</sup> A latinized style was looked upon as a proof of *clerkship*; and the scholar was always ready with such easy proof of his learning. We have but little space to follow the corruptions, which flowed from this source at later periods.

Norman-Romance became the court language in the reign of the Confessor; and *the law* appears to have been the channel, through which it first mixed with the native language of the country. The *Aula regia*, or King's household-court, enrolled its proceedings in Latin, but in its pleadings, &c. used the language of the Palace. Those, who feared local influence in the county courts, purchased the judgment of the sovereign; and the King's court, by degrees, became that of the nation. Hence its legal terms grew familiar, and early in the thirteenth century we find sprinkled through our MSS. such words as *cancelere*, a chancelour; *curt*, a court; *pleit*, a plea; *prisun*, a prison; *battel*, a conflict (originally trial by combat); *clame*, a claim; *fin*, an end, &c. &c. As this source of corruption was peculiar to our country, few words of this class are to be met with in the other Gothic dialects.

From the court-dialect were also taken many terms relating to courtly pastime and pageantry; more particularly those of the chase; and sometimes we have French salutations and exclamations, introduced much in the same way as in our fashionable novels, though certainly with less of impropriety. But it was not till the rage for translation came upon us, during the latter half of the fourteenth century, that foreign words overspread the language. It is painful to think how many men of genius have forwarded the mischief. Perhaps we might point to the "ballades" and "envoys" of Chaucer and his school, as offering the worst French specimen of our language; and to Johnson as the writer, who has most laboured to swamp it in the Latin.

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<sup>1</sup> Hampole, in his version of the Psalms, which was written about the middle of the fourteenth century, plainly tells us he used words, "most like unto the Latyne, so that thai that knowes noght the Latyne, bi the Ynglis may come to mani Latyne words."



The evils resulting from these importations have, I think, been generally underrated in this country. When a language must draw upon its own wealth for a new term, its form and analogies are kept fresh in the minds of those, who so often use them. But with the introduction of foreign terms, not only is the symmetry—the *science*—of the language injured, but its laws are brought less frequently under notice, and are the less used, as their application becomes more difficult. If a new word were added to any of the purer languages, such as the Sanscrit, the Greek, or the Welsh, it would soon be the root of numerous offshoots, substantives, adjectives, verbs, &c., all formed according to rule, and modifying the meaning of their root according to well-known analogies. But in a mixed and broken language few or no such consequences follow. The word remains barren, and the language is “enriched,” like a tree covered over with wreaths taken from the boughs of its neighbour; which carries a goodly show of foliage, and withers beneath the shade.

The language of Layamon may perhaps (at least in substance) be considered as the dialect spoken in South Gloucestershire during the twelfth century. One of its most striking peculiarities is its *numnation*, if we may be allowed to use a term, already familiar to the scholar. Many words end in *n*, which are strangers to that letter, not only in the Anglo-Saxon, but in all the later dialects of our language; and as this letter assists in the declension of nouns, and the conjugation of verbs, the *grammar* of this dialect becomes, to a singular degree, complicated and difficult.

Perhaps the following changes of termination may give a tolerably correct notion of the masculine declension.

Sing.	Plur.
N. A. God	God-es
G. God-es	God-e
D. God-e	God-en <sup>1</sup>
	-es

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<sup>1</sup> The inflexion in *en* is always a matter of great uncertainty. The Dutch definite adjective sometimes ends its nominative in *-e*, sometimes in *-en*.

The neuter nouns are declined in the same way, but take no inflexion in the plural save the *e* of the genitive, and perhaps the *en* of the dative. In both genders the *e* of the dative singular is often omitted.<sup>1</sup>

The feminine nouns take *e* as their only inflexion in either number, but, I think, in some few instances, make the dative plur. in *en*. Some feminines have the genitive singular in *es*, as in the Anglo-Saxon.

There is also what may be termed the *n* declension, common to all the three genders. The singular ends in *e*, and the plural in *en*; the genitive, however, sometimes taking *ene*. As some nouns have the *n* even in the nominative singular, it is difficult to say whether *n* be used as an inflexion in that number.

The indefinite adjective has almost the same declension as in the Anglo-Saxon.

m.	Sing. f.	n.	Plur. m. f. n.
N. god	god	god	god-e
G. god-es	god-re	god-es	god-re
			-e
D. god-e	god-re	god-e	god-en
-en <sup>2</sup>		-en <sup>2</sup>	-e
A. god-ne	god-e	god	god-e

When the adjective is definite (that is, connected with the definite article, a possessive pronoun, or a genitive case), it takes an *e* and is indeclinable. Sometimes, however, the definite adjective appears to take *en*.

The verbs are conjugated much in the same way as in the Anglo-Saxon; the endings *a* and *e*, *an* and *en*, *ath* and *eth*, being, of course, confounded. The *i* conjugation is still clearly distinguished, as *clepien* to call, ic *clepie*, I call, &c.; and the gerund in *enne* is sometimes met with. The points in which Layamon's verb differs from the Anglo-Saxon may, I think, be ranged under three heads.

1. The plural of the present indicative sometimes ends in *en*, instead of *eth*; and the first and third persons sin-

<sup>1</sup> The Anglo-Saxon noun also sometimes omits the inflexion of the dative.

<sup>2</sup> See note 1, p. 404.

gular, in the past tense of the "complex" verb, sometimes take an *e*. Both these peculiarities may, I think, be traced to the same cause—the use of the subjunctive mood instead of the indicative. In some of our dialects the former mood seems, at length, entirely to have supplanted the latter.

2. The plural of the past tense, and also the past participle sometimes ends in *e*, instead of *en*. But, I believe, that in neither of these cases was the vowel-ending quite unknown even to the Anglo-Saxon.

3. The first person singular of the present indicative, and the third person singular of the past tense indicative, and of the present optative or imperative, sometimes end in *en* instead of *e*. The *en* in the first person of the present reminds one of the Frankish; but its occurrence in the other cases is, I believe, peculiar to this singular and perplexing dialect.

The third person of the present indicative sometimes ends in *ethe* instead of *eth*, but I can only consider this as a blunder of the transcriber.

Among the possessive pronouns we find *min* and *thin*, and also *mi* and *thi*.<sup>1</sup> The vowel of the definite article is singularly varied, but in other respects its inflexions closely resemble the Anglo-Saxon. As it is constantly occurring I will here give its declension.

Chil|dric the Kai|sere . | biwon|: al | that he lok|ede on|.
 He | nom sum|er-set|e : and | he nom | dorset|e .
 And | al deu|ene<sup>8</sup> scir|e : that | volc al | for-ferd|e .
 And | he wil|tun-scir|e : mid with|ere<sup>6</sup> | igræt|te .
 He | nom al|le tha lond|es : in | to thær|e sæ<sup>7</sup> stron|de .
 Tha | æt than last|e : tha let|te heo blaw|en .

<sup>1</sup> I cannot agree with Mr. Thorpe in considering these latter pronouns as mere corruptions of the former; I believe them to be distinct words, and probably of far higher antiquity.

<sup>2</sup> [This alludes to Sir F. Madden, whose excellent edition of *Layamon* appeared in 1847.—W. W. S.]

<sup>3</sup> I can find no parish or hamlet of this name on the banks of the Severn.

<sup>4</sup> *th* has been substituted for the Anglo-Saxon characters *ð* and *þ*, as the facilities thus afforded to the English reader seemed to outweigh any inconvenience, which might result from confounding these two letters. But the (Old) English *þ* can be represented by no letter of our modern alphabet, without

	m.	Sing. f.	n.	Plur. m. f. n.
N.	the	the	that	the
G.	thes	there	thes	there
D.	thon	there	thon	thon
A.	thene	the	that	the

That this slight sketch is *very* imperfect, and in some points probably inaccurate, I am well aware. It would require a much better acquaintance with the MS. than I can lay claim to, always to distinguish between blunders of transcription and peculiarities of dialect, between the syllable which makes part of the *root*, and that which is merely its inflexion. The whole MS. will, however, be published; and by a gentleman who, I have little doubt, will do justice to a very difficult subject.<sup>2</sup>

Layamon informs us that he was a priest, and lived at Ernley,<sup>3</sup> by Severn. The books from which he compiled his history, were "the English book" which Bede wrote, a book in Latin composed by St. Austin and St. Albin, and the book of the Frankish clerk Wace. The extract<sup>4</sup> which follows, describes the famous battle of Bath [beginning at l. 21,011]. The "Kaiser," it should be observed, had already been once in Arthur's power, had agreed to quit the country for ever, had broken his pledge, and was now wasting the land with fire and sword.

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Childric the Kaiser won : all that he looked on,  
 He took Somerset : and he took Dorset,  
 And all the Devon-shire : —that folk were all destroy'd;  
 And he Wilton-shire : with cruelty oppress'd.  
 He took all the land[s] : unto the sea-strand.  
 Then, at the last : caused they [*rather*, he] to blow

---

danger of some mistake. It is found answering to *g*, to *h*, to *s*, and to *th*; and was, in all probability, pronounced as a strong dental breathing, and may now be considered as quite obsolete. This character 3 will therefore be used, in such Old English extracts, as there may be occasion to quote.

<sup>2</sup> *Devene* is the gen. pl. of *Deven*, which answers to the Anglo-Saxon *Defan*, the men of Devonshire.

<sup>3</sup> I have never met with this substantive elsewhere, but there can be little doubt of its meaning. [Sir F. Madden has—"with hostility he greeted."]

<sup>4</sup> *Se*, is here the genitive case singular; in which number this substantive is rarely found declined, even in the Anglo-Saxon.

Horn|es and bem|en : and bon|nien | his ferd|en .  
 And forth | he wol|de bu3|en : and bath|en al | bilig|gen .  
 And æc | bristow|e : abut|en birouw|en .  
 This | was heor|e ibeot| : ær heo | to bath|e com|en .

To bath|e com | the kaiser|e : and | bilæi | the ne cas|tel ther|e .  
 And | tha men | within|nen : oht|liche | agun|nen .  
 Step|en up|pen<sup>1</sup> stan|ene wal| : wel | iwep|ned ou|er al| .  
 And wer|eden | tha rich|e : with | than strong|e childrich|e .  
 Ther lai | the Kaiser|e : and Col|grim his | iuer|e .  
 And bal|dulf his broth|er : and mon|i an oth|er .

Arth|ur wes | bi north|e : and noht | her of nus|te .  
 Fer|de geond al | scotland : | and set|te het an | his ag|ere bond<sup>2</sup> .  
 Or|canei|e and Gal|wei|e : man | and mure|ne .  
 And al|le tha lond|es : the ther | to læ|ien .  
 Ar|thur hit wen|de : to | iwis|lichen thing|e .  
 That chil|dric ilith|en weor|en : to | his ag|ene lon|de .  
 And that | he nau|ere mæ|e : nolde cum|en her|e .  
 Tha com|en tha tid|ende : to Ar|thure King|e .  
 That Chil|dric tha kæl|sere : icum|en wes | to lond|en .  
 And | i than suth|-ende : sor|zen ther worht|en .

Tha Ar|thur seid|e : æth|elest king|en .  
 Wal|a wa wal|awa : that | ich spar|ede min|e iua| .  
 That | ich nau|ede | on hol|te : mid hun|gere hin|e adef|ed .  
 Oth|er mid sword|e : al hin|e to swug|en [or to swungen] .  
 Nu he | me gilt med|e : for mir|e god-ded|e .  
 Ah | swa me hælp|en drih|ten : thæs scop | thæs dæ|ies lih|ten .  
 Ther for|e he scal | ibid|en : bit|terest al|re bal|uwen .  
 Hard|e gom|enes : his bon|e ich wul|le iwar|then .  
 Col|grim and Bal|dulf : bei|ene ich wul|le auel|len .  
 And | al heor|e du3|ethe : dæth | scal ithol|ien .  
 Gif | hit wul|e iun|nen : wald|ende hæf|nen .  
 Ich wul|le wurth|liche wreke|en : al|le his with|er-ded|en .  
 3if | me mot | ilas|ten : that lif | amir|e breos|ten .  
 And | hit wul|le me | iun|ne : that | iscop mon|e and sun|ne .  
 Ne | scal næu|ere chil|dric : æft | me bichar|ren .

Nu cleop|ede Arthur : æth|elest king|en .  
 Whar | beo 3e min|e cniht|es : oht|e men | and with|te .  
 To hors|e . to hor|se : 3e [MS. he] hal|ethes god|e .

<sup>1</sup> The preposition *uppen* governs both an accusative case and a dative. If *wal* be the accusative, the adjective ought, according to rule, to have been *stanenne*; but we sometimes find the definite adjective in cases where the ordinary rules of grammar would seem to require the indefinite—in such phrases as, *enne Saxisc cniht*. Sometimes, though very rarely, we find the indefinite, where we might look for the definite adjective, as in the words, *thæ*

Horns and trumps : and their [his] soldiers to be boon [assembled] ;  
 And forth he wish'd to fare : and the Baths all beset,  
 And eke Bristow : round about to row ;  
 This was their threat : ere to Bath they came.

To Bath came the Kaiser : and beset the castle there ;  
 And the men within : gallantly began  
 Step upon the stonern wall : well yweapon'd over all,  
 And defended them the great ones [the place] : gainst the strong Childric.  
 There lay the Kaiser : and Colgrim his fere,  
 And Baldulf his brother : and many an other.

Arthur was in the north : and nought hereof wist he ;  
 He journey'd over all Scotland : and brought it under his own hand ;  
 Orkeney and Galoway : Man and Morey,  
 And all the lands : that thereby lay.  
 Arthur ween'd it : as a settled thing,  
 That Childric was gone : to his own land ;  
 And that he never more : would come here.  
 Then came the tidings : to Arthur King,  
 That Childric the Kaiser : was y-come to land,  
 And in the south quarter : sorrows there wrought.

Then Arthur said : (noblest of kings),  
 "Walawa ! walawa ! : that I spared my foe !  
 "That I had not on the holt<sup>2</sup> : with hunger kill'd him !  
 "Or with the sword : him all silenced [cut to pieces] !  
 "Now does he pay me back the meed : for my good deed !  
 "But, so help me the Lord : that shaped the light of day,  
 "Therefore he shall bide : the bitterest of all bale !  
 "Pains full grievous ! : his bane I will be.  
 "Colgrim and Baldulf : both I will quell,  
 "And all their nobles : death shall suffer.  
 "If it will grant : He that wields the heavens,—  
 "Worthily will I wreak : all his misdeeds ;  
 "If the life may last : within my breast,  
 "And He will grant it : that shaped sun and moon,—  
 "Childric shall never : again slip by me !"

Now call'd out Arthur : (noblest of kings),  
 "Where be ye my knights : gallant men and wight ?  
 "To horse, to horse : ye nobles good !

<sup>1</sup>*Arise kinges.* If these be not mere blunders on the part of the transcriber, I cannot satisfactorily account for them.

<sup>2</sup> *Holt* is here the dative singular, in which case it is often found without inflexion in the Old English.

<sup>3</sup> The *holt* refers to the wood of Caledon, into whose hilly recesses Arthur, according to the history, drove Childric before his submission.

And | we scul | led buȝ | en : tou | ward Bath | e swith | e .  
 Let | eth up fus | en : heȝ | e fork | en .  
 And bring | eth her | tha gæf | les : bifer | en ur | e cniht | es .  
 And | heo scul | len hong | ien : on hæȝ | e treow | en .  
 Ther | he let | te fordon | : feow | er and twe | ti child | erren <sup>1</sup> .  
 Al | emain | isce men | : of swith | e heȝ | e cun | nen .

Tha com | en tid | ende : to Ar | thure | than king | e .  
 That seoc | wes how | el his mæi | : ther for | e he | wes sar | i .  
 I clud | lig | ginde : and ther | he hin | e bilæf | de .

Hiȝ | enlich | e swith | e : forth | he gon lith | e .  
 That he | behal | ues bad | e : beh | to an | e uel | de .  
 Ther | he alih | te : and | his cniht | es al | le .  
 And on | mid heor | e burn | en : beorn | es sturn | e .  
 And he | a fif <sup>2</sup> | dæle : dæl | de his feord | e .  
 Tha | he haf | de al | iset | : and | al hit | isem | ed .  
 Tha dud | e he on | his burn | e : ibroid | e of stel | e .  
 The mak | ede | on al | uisc smith | : mid ath | elen | his craf | te .  
 He | wes ihat | en wyȝ | ar : the wit | eȝe wurh | te .  
 His sconk | en he hel | ede : mid hos | en of stel | e .  
 Cali | beorn | e his sweord | : he cwem | de [rather swein] bi | his sid | e .  
 Hit | wes iworht | in au | alun : mid wiȝ | ele-ful | le craf | ten .  
 Halm | he set | on haf | de : hæh <sup>4</sup> | of stel | e .  
 Ther on | wes mon | i ġim-ston | : al | mid gol | de bi-gon | .  
 He | wes ud | eres : thaȝ ath | elen king | es .  
 He | wes ihat | en Gos | whit : æl | chen oth | ere un | ilic | .

He heng | an his sweor | e : æn | ne sceld deor | e .  
 His nom | e wes | on brut | tisc : prid | -wen ihat | en .  
 Ther | wes in | nen igrau | en : mid red | e gol | de stau | en .  
 An on | -licnes deor | e : of driht | enes mod | er .  
 His sper | e he nom | an hond | e : tha ron | wes ihat | en .  
 Tha | he haf | den al | his iwed | en : tha leop | he on | his sted | en .  
 Tha | he miht | e bi | hald | en : tha | bihal | ues stod | en .  
 Then | e usæi | reste cniht | : the verd | e scol | de led | en .  
 Ne | isæh nœu | ere na | man : sel | ere | cniht nen | ne .  
 Then | e him | wes Ar | thur : ath | elest cun | nes .

Tha cleop | ede Ar | thur : lud | ere stæf | ne .  
 Lou | war <sup>5</sup> her | bifer | en us | : heth | ene hund | es .  
 The sloȝ | en ur | e al | deren : mid luth | ere heor | e craf | ten .

<sup>1</sup> This is the earliest instance I know, of the plural ending *eren* in our language. In the *Dutch* there are many such plurals, *blad-eren*, leaves; *lied-eren*, songs; *kind-eren*, children; *eij-eren*, eggs; *kalv-eren*, calves; &c. &c.

<sup>2</sup> The *burnie* seems to have been a kind of breastplate, accommodated in the

"And we must turn us : tow'rd Bath quickly ;  
 "Let them haste up : the high gallows,  
 "And bring here the pledges : before our knights,  
 "And they shall hang : on the high trees."  
 There he caus'd them slay : four-and-twenty youths,  
 Alemannish men : of right noble kins.

Then came tidings : to Arthur the king,  
 That sick was Howel his kinsman : (therefore was he sorry)  
 In Clyde lying : and there he left him.

With full great speed : forth gan he fare,  
 Till beside Bath : he turn'd him to a field,  
 Where he alighted : and his knights all ;  
 And on with their burnies<sup>2</sup> : the barons stern ;  
 And he in five portions : dealt out his army.  
 When he had all set out : and it all array'd,  
 Then don'd he his burnie : wide-spread with [fashioned of] steel ;  
 An elvish smith it made : with his noble craft,  
 (He was hight Wygar : the soothsaying smith) ;  
 His shanks he cover'd : with hosen of steel ;  
 Caliburn his sword : he fitted [swung] by his side ;  
 It was wrought in Avalon : with arts of grammar .  
 Helm he set on head : high-rais'd of steel ;  
 Thereon was many a gem-stone : all with gold beset ;  
 It was Uther's : the noble king's ;  
 It was hight Goswhit : —to every other unlike.

He hung on his neck : a precious shield,  
 Its name in British : Thridwen [Pridwen] was hight ;  
 Therein was graven : with red gold stones [tracings],  
 A precious likeness : of our Lord's mother.  
 His spear he took in hand : that Ron was hight.  
 When he had all his weeds : then leapt he on his steed.  
 Then might they behold : who beside him stood,  
 The fairest knight : that host could lead,  
 And ne'er saw man : better knight any,  
 Than was Arthur : —he of noblest kin.

Then cried out Arthur : with loud voice,  
 "Lo! every where here before us : the heathen hounds,  
 "That slew our elders : with their loathed [wicked] arts ;

mail armour of the period. The word is constantly occurring in the Old English romances. [A. S. *byrne*]. <sup>2</sup> See p. 349, n. 7.

<sup>3</sup> This adjective takes no inflexion, according to the rule on p. 321.

<sup>4</sup> Does this word answer to the Anglo-Saxon *la æghwer*? [No; "lo! where are here," &c.—W. W. S.]



And | heo us beoth | on lon | de : læth | est al | re thing | e .  
 Nu fus | en we | hom to : and stærc | liche | heom leg | gen on | .  
 And wræk | en wun | derlich | e : ur | e cun | and ur | e rich | e .  
 And wreċ | en then | e much | ele scom | e : that heo | us iacend | hab-  
 beoth .

That heo | ouer uth | en : com | en to dert | e-muth | en .  
 And al | le heo beoth | for-swor | ene : and al | le heo beoth | forlor | ene .

Heo | beoth for-dem | ed al | le : mid driht | tenes fuls | te .  
 Fus | e we | nu forth | -ward : uas | te to som | en .  
 Æf | ne al | swa sof | te : swa we | nan uf | el ne thoh | ten .  
 And then | ne we | heom cum | eth to : mi seolf | ic wul | len onfon .  
 An al | re freom | este : that fih | t ich wul | le bigun | nen .  
 Nu | we scul | len rid | en : and ou | er land glid | en .  
 And na | man bi | his liu | e : lud | e ne wurch | en .  
 Ah far | en fæst | liche : driht | en us fulst | en .

Tha rid | en agon : Ar | thur the rich | e mon | .  
 Beh | ouer wæl | de : an Bath | e wol | de isech | en .

Tha tid | ende com | to childrich | e : than strong | en and | than  
 rich | en .

That Ar | thur mid ferd | e com : al 3ar | u to fih | te .  
 Chil | dric and | his oht | e men : leop | en heom | to hors | en .  
 Igrif | en heor | e wep | nen : heo wus | ten heom | ifæi | ed .

This | isæh Ar | thur : ath | elest king | e .  
 Isæh | he æn | ne hæth | ene<sup>1</sup> eorl : hæ | den him | to 3ein | es .  
 Mid seou | en hun | dred . cniht | en : al 3ær | ewe | to fih | ten .  
 The orl | him seolf ferd | en : bifor | en al | his geng | e .  
 And Ar | thur him | seolf arn | de : biuor | en al | his ferd | e .  
 Ar | thur the ræi | e : ron | nom an hon | de .  
 He strah | te scaft stærc | ne : stith | imod | en<sup>2</sup> king | .  
 His hors | he let | te ir | nen : that | tha eorth | e dun | ede .  
 Sceld | he braid | on breos | ten : the king | wes abol | 3en .  
 He | smat bor | el then | e eorl : thurh | ut | tha breos | ten .  
 That | thæ heor | te to chan : and | the king cleop | ede | anan | .  
 The for | meste | is fæi | e : Nu ful | sten us drih | te .  
 And | tha hef | enlich | e quen | e : tha drih | ten aken | de .

Tha cleop | ede ar | thur : ath | elest king | e .  
 Nu | heom to nu | heom to : that for | mest is wel | idon .  
 Brut | tes hom leid | en on : swa me | scal a luth | ere don | .

<sup>1</sup> See p. 408, n. 1.

<sup>2</sup> I am not satisfied as to the meaning of this word. In the following passage,

Then sayde that rich *roye*,  
 I will have that fayr *May*,  
 And wedde her to my quene.—*Emare*, 430.

"And to us they be, on earth : loathed most of all things ;  
 "Now haste we to them : and stoutly on them lay,  
 "And wondrously avenge : our kin, and our realm ;  
 "And wreek the mickle shame : that they have done us,  
 "For that o'er the waves : they came to Derte-mouth ;  
 "And they be all forsworn : and they [shall] be all forlorn !

"They [shall] be doomed all : with the Lord's help !  
 "Haste we forward : quickly together,  
 "E'en all as softly : as we no evil thought,  
 "And when we to them come : myself will take [commence]  
 "The bravest of them all [First of all] : —that fight I will begin.  
 "Now must we ride : and o'er the land glide,  
 "And no man for his life : must loudly work ;  
 "But fare we stoutly ! : the Lord assist us ! "

Then gan to ride : Arthur the mighty man,  
 He turn'd him o'er the weald : and the Baths would seek.

Then came tidings to Childric : the strong and the mighty,  
 That Arthur with army came : all yare for the fight ;  
 Childric and his gallant men : lept on their horses,  
 And griped their weapons : —they wist themselves feymen !

This saw Arthur : (noblest of kings !)  
 He saw a heathen earl : bending his course against him,  
 With seven hundred knights : all yare for the fight.  
 The earl himself went : before all his troop,  
 And Arthur himself ran : before all his army.  
 Arthur the ray<sup>2</sup> : took Ron in hand,  
 He levell'd the strong shaft : (sternhearted king !)  
 His horse he let run : that the earth shook ;  
 Shield he spread on breast : —the king was wrath—  
 He smote Borel the earl : out through the breast,  
 That the heart split : —and the king cried anon,  
 "The foremost one is fey ! : Now help us the Lord,  
 "And the heavenly Queen : that bare the Lord."

Then cried out Arthur : (noblest of kings !)  
 "Now on them ! now on them ! : the first part is well done."  
 The Brits laid on them : as on villain man should do,

it might be taken as closely connected with the Old English *roy*, a king; but, as used in *Piers Ploughman*, a familiar, if not a low meaning is attached to it. [*Rayes* in *P. Plowman*, B. v. 211, is a different word.—W. W. S.]

<sup>2</sup> Here we have the definite adjective, with *en* in the nominative singular. The definite adjective was frequently used to express admiration ; and we still use the definite article for that purpose, as, *Alfred, the good king* !

Heo bit| tere swip| en 3ef| uen : mid ax| es and | mid sweord| es .  
 Ther feol| le chel| driches men| : ful| le twa | thusend| .  
 Swa neu| ere ar| thur ne les| : næu| ere æn| ne of his| .  
 Ther weor| en sæx| isce| men : folk| en al| re ærm| est .  
 And | tha al| emain| isce men| : 3eom| erest al| re leod| en .  
 Ar| thur mid | his sweord| e : fæi| e-scip| e wurh| te .  
 Al | that he | smat to| : hit | wes son| e fordon| .  
 Al wæs | the king | abol| 3en : swa bith | the wil| de bar| .  
 Then| ne he | i than mæs| te : mon| ie imet| eth .  
 This | isæh Chil| dric : and gon | him to char| ren  
 And beh | him ou| er au| ene : to bur| 3en him seol| uen .  
 And ar| thur him læc | to : swa hit | a li| un weor| en .  
 And fus| de heom | to flod| e : mon| ie ther weor| en fæi| e .  
  
 Ther sunk| en to | than grund| e : fif| and twen| ti hundred .  
 Tha al | wes au| ene stram| : mid stel| e ibrug| ged .  
 Chel| dric ou| er that wat| e flæh| : mid fif| tene hun| dred cniht| en .  
 Thoh| te forth sith| en : and ou| er sæ lith| en .  
 Ar| thur isæh | Col| grim : clim| ben to munt| en .  
 Bu3| en to | than hul| le : tha ou| er bath| en stond| eth .  
 And Bald| ulf beh | him af| ter : mid seou| e thus| end cniht| es .  
 Heo thoht| en i| than hul| le : hæh| liche | at ston| den .  
 Weor| ien heom | mid wep| nen : and Ar| thur awæm| men .  
  
 Tha | isæh Ar| thur : ath| elest king| en .  
 Whar Col| grim at stod| : and | æc stal | wrohte .  
 Tha clup| ede | the king| : ken| liche lud| e .  
 Bald| e min| e thein| es : buh| 3eth to | than hul| les .  
 For 3ers| tendæi | wæs Col| grim : mon| nen al| re ken| nest .  
 Nu him | is al | swa ther| e gat| : ther | he then| e hul wat| .  
 Hæh | uppen hul| le : seht| eth [*read fehteth*] mid horn| en .  
 Then| ne com| ed the wlf<sup>1</sup> | wil| de : touw| ard hir| e wind| en .  
 Theh | the wulf be| on an| e : but| en ælc | iman| e .  
 And | ther weor| en in an| e lok| en : fif hun| dred gat| en .  
 The wulf | heom to | iwit| eth : and al| le heom | abit| eth .  
 Swa | ich wul| le nu | to dæi| : Col| grim al | fordemen .  
 Ich | am wulf | & he | is gat| : the gum| e scal be| on fæi| e .

Many of Layamon's couplets have both alliteration and the middle rime; very few—originally, it may be, none—are without either one or the other. The relative value, in which he held his rime and his alliteration, deserves some notice. In Anglo-Saxon verse, the syllables, which take

<sup>1</sup> *Wl* was used for *wol* in English MSS. and even for *wul* in Latin MSS. during the 12th century, as *wlpes* for *vulpes*, *wltus* for *vultus*, &c.

Bitter blows they gave : with axes and with swords.  
 There fell Childric's men : full two thousand,  
 So never Arthur lost : never one of his.  
 There were Sexish men : of all folks most wretched,  
 And the Alemannish men : saddest of all people !  
 Arthur with his sword : death-doings wrought,  
 All that he smote against : quickly was it done for.  
 The king was enraged : all as the wild boar,  
 When, mid his mast : many he meeteth.  
 This saw Childric : and gan him to turn,  
 And bent his way o'er Avene : himself to save ;  
 And Arthur gave them play [flew towards them] : as 'twere a lion,  
 And drove them to the flood : —many there were fey !

There sunk to the ground : five and twenty hundred ;  
 Then was Avene-stream : all bridged with steel.  
 Childric over that water fled : with fifteen hundred knights ;  
 He thought to haste hence : and over sea sail.  
 Arthur saw Colgrim : climb up the mountains,  
 And turn him to the hill : that o'er the Baths standeth.  
 And Baldulf gat him after : and seven thousand knights ;  
 Thought they on the hill : aloft to stand out,  
 Defend them with their weapons : and Arthur scare [injure].

Then saw Arthur : (noblest of kings !)  
 Where Colgrim stood out : and form'd eke his array.  
 Then call'd out the king : with keen cry,  
 " My bold thanes : turn ye to the hills,  
 " For yesterday was Colgrim : of all men the keenest,  
 " Now is't with him, as with the goat : where she keeps the hill ;  
 " High upon the hill : she sitteth [fighteth] with her horns,  
 " Then cometh the wild wolf : towards her trail [approaching her],  
 " Though the wolf be alone : without any fellow,  
 " And there should be in one flock [fold] : five hundred goats,  
 " The wolf to them wendeth : and all of them it biteth.  
 " So now will I to-day : Colgrim all doom,  
 " I am wolf, and he is goat : —that man shall be fey ! "

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the alliteration, are always accented ; but the sectional rime, and in one or two instances even the middle rime, may be found resting upon a syllable which has no accent. When the latter alliterative metres take the final rime, the riming syllable imperatively demands the accent ; and the alliteration is often thrown upon an unaccented syllable. Layamon appears to take a middle course. It would seem, he gave accents both to his riming and his alliterative syllables ;

but the former were often obliged to content themselves with a false accent—the proper rhythm of the sentence being sacrificed for that purpose. We very seldom find the rime and the alliteration placed upon adjacent syllables, and each striving for the accent, as is often the case in later poems.

The struggle between alliteration and final rime began later, and continued much longer in this country than on the continent. King Edgar's death-song has one or two couplets, in which alliteration appears to be forgotten; but the MS. is so faulty, and in some parts of the poem so obviously corrupt, that no one can safely speculate on such doubtful premises. On the other hand, Otfrid's *Evangeley*, which may date about the year 870, has few or no traces of alliteration. Its rimes often rest upon a false accent, and its rhythm strongly resembles such as may be found in some of our early sectional metres. It affords us a curious instance, how like will often be the changes of two kindred dialects, long after they cease to influence each other. The following extract is taken from the opening of the second [section of the first] book.

Vuol | a druht | in min |  
 ia | bin ih | scale thin |  
 Thiu arm | a muat | er min |  
 eig | an thiu ist | si thin  
 Fing | ar thin | an  
 dua an | a mund min | an  
 Then ouh | hant thin | a  
 in | thia zung | un min | a

Oh! my Lord!  
 truly be I slave of thine!  
 Wretched mother<sup>1</sup> mine  
 thine own handmaiden is she!  
 Finger thine  
 place within my mouth,  
 Lift up [Lay] eke thine hand  
 upon my tongue,

Hwan | thu sixst | on leod | e : king | that is wil ful .  
 And domesmon [niminde]<sup>2</sup> : proest | that is wil de .  
 Bisch | op slou | : old | -mon lech | ur .  
 3unch | -mon lie3 | er : wim | mon schom | eles .  
 Child | un | theand : thral | un | buxsum .  
 Ath | eling brith | eling : lond | withut | e la3 | e  
 Al | so seid | e Bed | e : wo ther | e theod | e

<sup>1</sup> That is, the Church.

<sup>2</sup> [This word is omitted in the former edition, its place being supplied by a stroke.—W. W. S.]

Thaz ih | lob thin | az  
 si | luden | taz  
 Giburt | sunes thin | ea  
 druht | ines min | es  
 Ioh ih | bigin | ne red | inon  
 uuo er | bigon | da bred | igon  
 Thaz ih | giuuar | si har | to  
 ther | o sin | ero uuor | to  
 Ioh zei | chan thin | er det | a tho |  
 thes | uuir bir | un nu | so fro |  
 Ioh uuo | thiun sel | ba hei | li  
 nust uuor | olti | gimein | i  
 Thaz ih | ouh hiar | giscrib | e  
 uns | zi reht | emo lib | e  
 Uuo | firdan |<sup>1</sup> er un | sih fand |  
 tho | er sel | bo doth | es ginand |  
 Ioh uuo | er fuar | ouh than | ne  
 ub | ar him | ila al | le  
 Vb | ar sun | nan liot |  
 ioh al | lan thes | an uuor | olt-thiot |  
 Thaz | ih druht | tin than | ne  
 in ther | o sag | u ne | firspir | ne  
 Noh | in them | o uuah | en  
 thiun uuort | ni miss | ifah | en

That I thy praise  
 be singing—  
 The birth of thy son  
 my Lord!  
 Yea, that I begin to tell  
 how he began to preach;  
 That I be right heedful  
 of his words;  
 Yea, signs that he did then  
 (whence we are now so glad);  
 Yea, how the self salvation  
 now to the world is common;  
 That I eke here may write  
 (to further our righteous life)  
 How sinful he us found,  
 when of death himself he tasted;  
 Yea, eke how he fared then  
 over the heavens all,  
 Over the sun's light,  
 and all this world's rout;  
 That, O Lord! I then  
 in this tale err not,  
 Nor in this recital  
 any words missay.

The poor monk then prays, that he may sing to God's land, and (with needless scruple) *not* for his own glory.

The reflection contained in the following extract, seems to have been a favourite one; for it may be found in different MSS. and with considerable variations. As here given from a Cotton MS.<sup>2</sup> it is probably of the 12th century. Alliteration seems to be quite neglected, and there is but one line that rimes.

When thou see'st 'mongst a people king that is wilful,  
 And justicer [taking bribes;] priest that is wild;  
 Bishop sluggish; old man a lechur;  
 Young man a liar; woman shameless;  
 Child not thriving; thrall disobedient;  
 Nobleman prodigal; a land without law—  
 E'en as Bede said, "Wo to that people!"

<sup>1</sup> This word (if indeed it be rightly rendered) does not take the plural inflexion.

<sup>2</sup> Laysamon MS. Cal. A. ix. [The extract is printed at the end of Wright's edition of the Owl and Nightingale, p. 80.—W. W. S.]

For the most part, however, those poems, which rejected alliteration, took the rime. The Romance of Horn may afford us an example; and may at the same time teach us, how long it was before the *sectional verse* was generally recognised as such in our manuscripts. In the Cambridge MS.<sup>1</sup> indeed, though some of the couplets are written continuously, most of them are divided into two short verses;

---

Al|le be|on he blith|e : that | to my | songe lith|e .

A sang | ihc schal | 3ou sing|e : <sup>2</sup> of mur|ry<sup>4</sup> the king|e .

King | he was | biwes|te : so lang|e so | hit last|e .

God|hild het | his quen| : <sup>3</sup> faire<sup>5</sup> ne mi3|te non ben| .

He had|de a son|e that | het horn| : fair|er ne mist|e<sup>6</sup> non | beo born .

Ne | no rein | upon | birin|e : ne sun|ne upon | bischin|e

Fair|er nis | non than|e he was| : he | was bri3t | so the glas| .

He | was whit | so the flur| : ros|e-red | was his | colour| .

In non|e king|e rich|e : nas non | his ilich|e .

Twelf fer|en he had|de . that alle<sup>7</sup> with him ladde .

Al|le rich|e man|nes son|es : and alle | hi wer|e fair|e gom|es .

With | him for | to plei|e : and mest | he luu|ede twei|e .

That on | him het hath|ulf child| : and | that oth|er fik|enild| .

Ath|ulf was | the bes|te : and fik|enylde | the werst|e .

Hit was | upon | a som|eres day| : al|so ihc | you tel|le may| .

Mur|ri the god|e king| : rod | on his | pleing| .

Bi|the se sid|e : as|e he was won|ed rid|e .

He fond | bi the strond|e : ariu|ed on |<sup>8</sup> his lond|e .

Schip|es fitten|e : with sar|azins<sup>9</sup> ken|e .

He ax|ede what | iso3|te : oth|er to lon|de bro3|te . &c.

---

We will now pass, with Warton, to the education of

---

The kyng | com in | to hal|le : among | his kni3|tes al|le .

Forth | he clup|ede ath|elbrus| : that | was stiward of | his hus<sup>1</sup> .

---

<sup>1</sup> Univ. Lib. Gg. 4. 27.

<sup>2</sup> [Printed in King Horn, ed. J. R. Lumby, for the Early English Text Society, 1866. The extract comprises ll. 1-40.—W. W. S.]

<sup>3</sup> No metrical point.

<sup>4</sup> The difference of names in the two MSS. will not escape notice. It would be easy to show the greater correctness of the Cambridge copy, but space is wanting.

but in the Harl. MS. which is later by three fourths of a century, the poem is written after the old fashion, *in couplets*.

I make the following extracts from the Cambridge MS. The reader may compare them with those, which Warton has taken from the Harleian.<sup>2</sup>

---

All they be blithe : that to my song listen !

A song I will you sing : of Murry the King  
 King he was by west : (as long as it lasted) ;  
 Godhild hight his queen : — fairer could none be ;  
 He had a son that hight Horn : — fairer could none be born,  
 Nor rain rain upon : nor sun shine upon ;  
 Fairer is there none than he was : he was bright as the glass,  
 He was white as the flow'r : rosy-red was his colour ;  
 In no king's realm : was any his like !

Twelve feres he had : that he with him led,  
 (All great men's sons : and all of them were fair men)  
 With him for to play : and most he loved two.  
 The one by him was call'd child Athulf : and the other Fikenild ;  
 Athulf was the best : and Fikenild the worst.

It was upon a summer's day : (as I you may tell)  
 Murry the good king : rode for his sport,  
 By the sea side : as he was wont to ride.  
 He found by the strand : arriv'd in his land,  
 Ships fifteen : of Sarazins keen.  
 He asked what they sought : or what to land they brought, &c.

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Horn, and the love of poor Rymenhild [ll. 223-326].

---

The king came in to hall : among all his knights.  
 Forth he called Athelbrus : that was steward of his house,

---

<sup>1</sup> This is *probably* a mistake for *fairer*.

<sup>2</sup> Here *s = s = 3*.

<sup>3</sup> Here the Harl. MS. reads, *that he with him ladde* ; I have construed accordingly.

<sup>4</sup> If this be not a mere blunder for *Sarazines*, it is one of the earliest instances I have met with of the contracted plural-ending.



Stiw|ard tak | nu her|e : mi fund|lyng for | to ler|e .  
 Of thin|e mester|e : of wud|e and of | riuer|e .  
 And tech | him to harp|e<sup>1</sup> : with | his nay|les scharp|e .  
 Beuor|e me | to keru|e : & of | the cup|e seru|e .  
 Thu tech | him of al|le the lis|te : that | thu eu|re of wis|te .  
 In<sup>2</sup> | his feir|en thou wis|e : in | to oth|ere | seru|e  
 Horn | thu un|deruon|g : & tech | him of harp|e & song|e .

Ath|ilbrus | gan ler|e : horn | and his | yfer|e .  
 Horn | in hert|e la3|te : al | that he | him ta3|te .  
 In | the curt | and ut|e : and el|les al|abut|e  
 Luu|ede men | horn child| : and mest | him lou|ede Rym|enhild<sup>3</sup> .  
 The kyng|es o3|ene dos|ter<sup>4</sup> : he | was mest | in tho3|te .

Heo lou|ede so | horn child| : that ne3 | heo gan wex|e wild| .  
 For heo | ne mi3|te at bord|e : with | him spek|e no word|e .  
 Ne no3t | in the hal|le : among | the kni3t|es al|le .  
 Ne no whar in | non oth|er sted|e : of folk | heo had|de dred|e .  
 Bi dai|e ne | bi ni3t|e : with | him spek|e ne mi3|te .  
 Hir|e sor|e3e ne | hire pin|e : ne mi3t|e neu|re fin|e .  
 In heort|e heo had|de wo| : and | thus hir|e biho3|te tho| .

Heo send|e hir|e son|de : Athelbrus | to hond|e .  
 That | he com|e hir|e to| : and al|so schold|e horn do| .  
 Al|in to bur|e : for | heo gan | to lur|e .  
 And | the sond|e seid|e : that sik | lai that maid|e .  
 And bad | him com|e swith|e : for | heo nas noth|ing blith|e .

The stu|ard was | in hert|e wo| : for | he nus|te what | to do<sup>5</sup> .  
 Wat rym|enhild hur|e tho3t|e : gret wun|der him thu3|te .<sup>6</sup>  
 Abut|e horn | the yong|e : to bur|e for | to bring|e .  
 He tho3te upon | his mod|e : hit nas | for non|e god|e .  
 He tok | him anoth|er<sup>6</sup> : ath|ulf horn|es broth|er .

Ath|ulf he sed|e ri3t | anon | : thu | schalt with | me to bur|e gon  
 To spek|e with rym|enhild stil|le : and wit|en hur|e wil|le .  
 In horn|es ilik|e : thu | schalt hur|e biswik|e  
 Sor|e ihc me | of-dred|e : he wol|de horn | mis-red|e .

Ath|elbrus | gan Ath|ulf led|e<sup>6</sup> : and in|to bur|e with | him 3ed<sup>6</sup> .  
 Anon | upon Ath|ulf child| : Rym|enhild | gan wex|e wild .  
 He wend|e that horn | hit wer|e : that | heo han|ede ther|e .

<sup>1</sup> No metrical point.

<sup>2</sup> *Neg!* A.S. was a kind of *plectrum*, with which the harper struck the strings of his instrument.

<sup>3</sup> [Read *And*; J. R. Lumby.]

<sup>4</sup> Here we have *doster* written for *do3ter*—a clear proof how close was the

"Steward, take now here : my foundling to teach him  
 "Of thy mystery : of wood and of river.  
 "And teach him to harp : with his nails<sup>2</sup> sharp,  
 "Before me to carve : and with the cup to serve.  
 "Do thou teach him all the arts : that ever thou wist of.  
 "His feres do thou instruct : in *other* service—  
 "Horn take to thee : and teach him harp and song."

Athelbrus gan teach : Horn and his feres ;  
 Horn by heart caught : all that he him taught.  
 In the court and out : and every where else about,  
 Men lov'd child Horn : and him most loved Rymenhild,  
 The king's own daughter : —he was most in her thought.

She so lov'd child Horn : that she gan nigh wax wild  
 For she could not, at table : with him speak one word,  
 Nor in the hall : among all the knights,  
 And nowhere in other place : —of people she had dread ;  
 By day or by night : with him speak she could not !  
 Her sorrow and her pain : never might have end ;  
 In heart she had woe : and then bethought her thus.

She sent her message : to the hand of Athelbrus,  
 That to her he should come : and also should make Horn  
 Come all to her bow'r : for she gan to sadden.  
 And the message said : that sick lay the maid,  
 And bade him come quickly : for she was nothing blithe.

The steward was sad in heart : for he wist not what to do.  
 What Rymenhild was thinking of : great wonder seem'd to him—  
 About the youth Horn : —the bringing him to bow'r ;  
 He thought in his mind : it was for no good ;  
 He took him another man : Athulf, Horn's brother.

"Athulf," he said right anon : "Thou shalt wend with me to bow'r,  
 "To speak to Rymenhild quietly : and learn her will.  
 "In likeness of Horn : thou shalt her deceive,  
 "Sore I fear me : she would Horn mislead."

Athelbrus gan Athulf lead : and to bow'r with him he went,  
 Anon, upon child Athulf : Rymenhild gan wax wild.  
 She ween'd that it was Horn : that she had there.

connexion between the two letters *s* and *3*. So also *doster*, daughter ; Prompt. Parv. p. 129. See p. 419, n. 6.

<sup>2</sup> *Thukle* A.S. is the past tense of *thencan* to seem—*thokte* the past tense of *thincan* to think. The distinction is preserved in the words *thu3te* and *tho3te*. We now confound these verbs.

<sup>3</sup> A metrical point.

Heo set|te him | on bed|de : with Ath|ulf child | he wed|de.  
On hir|e arm|es twey|e : Ath|ulf heo | gan lei|e.

Horn | quoth heo | wel long|e : ihc hab|be the lu|ued strong|e.  
Thu | schalt thi trewth|e plizt|e : on | myn hond | her riȝ|te.  
Me | to spus|e hold|e : and ihc | the lord | to wol|de.<sup>1</sup>

Ath|ulf sed|e on hir|e ir|e : so stil|le hit wer|e  
Thi tal|e nu | thu lyn|ne : for horn | nis noȝt | her in|ne.  
Ne beo | we noȝt | ilich|e : horn | is fair|er and rich|e.  
Fair|er bi on|e rib|be : thane an|i man | that lib|be.  
Theȝ horn | were un|der mold|e : oth|er el|les wher | he wold e.  
Oth|er hen|ne a thus|end mil|e : ihc nol|de him | ne the | bigil e.

Rym|enhild hir|e biwen|te : and ath|elbrus ful|e heo schent e.  
Hen|nes thu go | thu ful|e theof| : ne wurs|tu me neu|re mor|e leof.  
Went ut | of my bur| : with much|el mesau|entur | . &c. &c.

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I fully agree in the opinion advanced by Price, as to the origin of this Romance. In its present shape it may be of later date than the Norman version, but the *original* was in

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<sup>1</sup> In the Harl. MS. *wolde* and *holds* change places, as they certainly ought to do. One might almost think they were misplaced in this MS. from a spirit of waggishness.

She set him on the seat : with child Athulf went she mad !  
 Within her arms two : Athulf gan she lay.

" Horn," quoth she, " full long : I have loved thee strongly.  
 " Thou shalt thy troth plight : here on my hand rightly,  
 " Me as thy spouse to rule : and I thee as my Lord to hold."

Athulf said in her ear : as softly as might be,  
 " Cease now thy tale : for Horn is not here,  
 " Nor be we in aught alike : Horn is fairer and is rich,  
 " Fairer by a rib<sup>2</sup> : than any man that lives.  
 " Though Horn were under ground : or else where'er he would,  
 " Or hence a thousand miles : I would not him nor thee beguile."

Rymenhild turn'd her round : and foully Athelbrus she shent,  
 " Hence go thou, thou foul thief : nor shalt thou to me ever more  
     be dear,  
 " Wend out of my bow'r : with mickle *mesaventure*, &c. &c.

all probability Anglo-Saxon. The notions which Ritson held on this subject, have been long since losing ground; and may now be considered as exploded.

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<sup>2</sup> That is, I suppose, *taller* by a rib. I never met with the phrase elsewhere.

## CHAPTER IV.

But for the rime is light and lewde,  
 Yet make it somewhat agreeable,  
 Though some verse *sayle in a syllable*,  
 And that I do no diligence,  
 To shewe crafte, but sentence.

*Chaucer, Ho. Fame, 3. 6.*

## THE METRE OF FOUR ACCENTS

has its origin involved in much obscurity. It may be doubted, in the first place, whether it originated in the Latin rhythm of four accents, or is of native growth; and secondly, supposing it of English origin, whether it be a sectional metre, or one that has sprung from the alliterative couplet.

The metre of four accents and eight syllables was familiar to our *Latinists* at a very early period. In their verses, as in our later English rhythms, we find not only the false accent, but alliteration subordinate to the rime, and often resting upon unaccented syllables. Of this character are the well-known verses of Aldhelm, written about the close of the seventh century;

Lec | tor cas | te cath | olic | e  
 At | que ob | ses ath | letic | e  
 Tu | is pul | satus | preci | bus  
 Ob | nixe | flagi | tanti | bus  
 Hym | nista | carmen | ceci | ni, &c.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> These accentual verses are not modelled on the Trochaic Dimeter, which is not mentioned by Bede, and seems to have been unknown to his contemporaries; but on the Dimeter "Iambic Colophon," (Bede calls it *tetrameter*) consisting of an anapaest, two iambs, and a supernumerary syllable. The rhythmus is used in a staff of four verses, with continuous rime, by Mapes, p. 48; with interwoven rime, Reliq. Antiq. i. 30; also by Mapes, in a staff with an indefinite number of verses and continuous rime, p. 64. It was a favourite metre, in the 6th and 7th centuries. The verses of Boniface are modelled on the common Iambic Dimeter.

and those of his friend, the great apostle of Germany.

Vale | frater | floren | tibus |  
 Juven | tutis | cum vir | ibus |  
 Ut flor | eas | cum Dom | ino |  
 In sem | piter | no so | lio |, &c.<sup>1</sup>

Now we have early Norman poems, which closely follow the rhythm of these Latin verses ; but I have hitherto vainly searched for it in any *English* poem. As soon as the writer turns to his mother-tongue, the tale of syllables is no longer counted, and the rhythm is measured by the ear. As English and Norman poems are often found in the same MS. the contrast is brought distinctly under the eye of the reader, and may, probably, convince him that, although these Latin rhythms may have forwarded the development of our English metre, they were not the source whence it took its origin.

Whether this metre be sectional or not, is a question of greater difficulty. The Gothic dialects of Northern Europe had a metre of four accents, which was clearly of this character ; and our own sectional metres abound in verses of four accents, and occasionally exhibit almost all the peculiarities of the metre before us. Still however the position of the stops,<sup>2</sup> the general flow of the rhythm, and even what remains of the alliteration, all tend to throw doubt on the conclusion, to which these facts would seem to lead us.

For instance, we often find stops in the midst of a verse—sometimes even such as close a period.

And lyghten of heore justeris gode  
 And yeod | en on fot | e : men | they met | ten  
 And everiche othir faire gretten.

And they lighted from their chargers good,  
 And went on foot. Men they met  
 And each the other fairly greeted.

*Alisaunder* (ed. Weber), 6801.

<sup>1</sup> See the same, in an interwoven staff of eight lines, Mapes, pp. 93, 185 ; in an indefinite staff, *id.* 131.

<sup>2</sup> See MS. Cotton, Nero D. xi. And see Wyntoun's Chronicle, 2. 444.

The subordinate stops are of constant occurrence.

Nis non | so hot | : that hit | ne col | ath  
 Ne noȝt | so hwit | : that hit | ne sol | ath  
 Ne noȝt | so leof | : that hit | ne aloth | ath  
 Ne noȝt | so glad | : that hit | ne awroth | ath

There is nought so hot, that it cooleth not ;  
 And nought so white, that it soileth not ;  
 And nought so dear, that it doth not disgust,  
 And nought so pleas'd, that it is not angry.

*Hule and Niztingale*, 1266.

Mi son | e heo sed | e : hav | e this ring | .  
 Whil | he is thin | : ne du | te nothing | .  
 That fur | the bren | ne<sup>1</sup> : ne adren | che se.  
 Ne ire ne steil ne mai the sle.

My son, she said, take thou this ring,  
 Whilst it is thine, fear nothing,  
 That fire burn thee, or sea drown—  
 Nor iron nor steel may slay thee.

*Floriz and Blauncheſtur*, l. 3.

Again, in such poems as show traces of alliteration, we have the riming letters varying, for the most part, in each verse. Were the metre *sectional*, I think they would be found, more frequently, running through the couplet. As it is, not only is the alliteration confined to the verse. but such verse often fulfils all the conditions of the alliterative couplet, and this, sometimes, through passages of considerable length. In *Ywayne and Gawaine* nine out of the twelve first<sup>2</sup> verses are of this character.

Almygh | ti god | : that ma | de manky n | ,  
 He schil | de<sup>3</sup> his ser | vandes : out | of sin | !  
 And mayn | tene them | : with might | and mayne  
 That her | kens<sup>4</sup> Y | waine : and | Gawayne | !

<sup>1</sup> A metrical point in MS.

<sup>2</sup> In poems of the 14th and 15th centuries, the opening lines often betray the model, which the author had in view, though he widely deviates from it, as the poem advances, and he becomes careless in his versification.

<sup>3</sup> 3rd pers. pres. opt. "May he keep his servants," &c.

<sup>4</sup> 3rd pers. pl. pres. ind. North. Dialect. "That harken to," &c. An invocation of blessings upon the hearers was a common mode of introduction. bet to the Romance and the Mystery.

Thai war knightes : of the tabyl rownde  
 Tharfor | e lis | tens <sup>1</sup> : a lyt | el stownd | e .

Ar | thur the kyng | : of Yyn | gland | <sup>2</sup>  
 That wan al Wales with his hand  
 And | al Scot | land : als sayes | the buke |  
 And man | i mo | : if men | will luke |  
 Of al knightes he bar the pryse  
 In werld | was non | : so war | ne wise | &c. [ll. 1-12.]

The oldest English poem, I know of, in this metre is the Hule and Niȝtengale. It is found both in the Layamon MS.<sup>3</sup> and in an Oxford MS.<sup>4</sup> of later date; and was probably written not long after the year 1200. Its author, I have little doubt, was John of Guildford; for it follows (in the Oxford MS.) a poem, that was avowedly written by him; and the praises it bestows upon Nichol of Guildford, could only have proceeded from one, who was an intimate and friend. The two were probably fellow-townsmen.

This poem has certainly been underrated by Warton.<sup>5</sup> I do not think it wanting either in "invention" or "poetry"; but the quality which most distinguishes it, is what John of Guildford would doubtless have termed its *wisdom*. The contrast he draws between the useful and the brilliant, occasionally shews both depth of observation and soundness of judgment.

I shall, however, take those passages which make mention of "Nichole of Guldevorde." So little is known of our earlier writers, that almost any allusion to them must

<sup>1</sup> 2nd pers. plur. imperative. Northern Dialect.

<sup>2</sup> *Yngland* was doubtless intended to have three syllables. The Anglo-Saxon *Engla land* had in the Old English sometimes two, sometimes three syllables, and was written both *Engleland* and *England*. These were often confounded.

<sup>3</sup> Cotton MS. Cal. A. ix.

<sup>4</sup> Jesus MS. 86.

<sup>5</sup> It is pretty clear, from his observation upon the rimes, and also from his notice of the contents, that Warton never read the poem. He seems, indeed, but seldom to have opened a MS.; and when he gives an extract, or ventures a criticism, both extract and criticism will generally be found in the *Catalogue*. Upon the accuracy of the note in the *Catalogue* he relied in the present case; and it has misled him.



be matter of interest. Nichol appears to have written in praise of the nightingale—probably in some work on the nature of animals.<sup>1</sup>

Ich wot | wel quath | : the niȝt | ingal | e .  
 Ne thar | f thar | of : bo | no tal | e .  
 Mais | ter nich | ole : of guld | eford | e .  
 He | is wis | : an war | of word | e .  
 He | is of dom | e : suth | e glen | .  
 And him | is loth | : eu | rich untheu | .  
 He | wot in | siȝt : in ech | e song | e .  
 Wo sing | et wel | : wo sing | et wrong | e .  
 And he | can sched | e : vrom | the riȝ | te .  
 That woȝ | e, that thus | ter : from | the liȝ | te .

Tho hul | e one wil | e : hi | bi-thoȝ | te .  
 And af | ter than | : this word | up-broȝ | te .  
 Ich gran | ti wel | : that he | us dem | e .  
 Vor theȝ | he wer | e : wil | e brem | e .  
 And lof | him wer | e : niȝ | tingal | e .  
 And oth | er wiȝ | te : gen | te and smal | e .  
 Ich wot | he is | nu : suth | e acol | ed .  
 Nis | he vor | the : noȝt | afol | ed .  
 That he | for thin | e : ol | de'lu | ne .  
 Me | adun leg | ge : and | the bu | ne .  
 Ne schal | tu neu | re : so | him quem | e .  
 That | he for | the : fals | dom dem | e .  
 He | is him rip | e : and | fast-red | e .  
 Ne lust | him nu | : to non | e unred | e .  
 Nu him | ne lust | : na mor | e ple | ie .  
 He wil | e gon | : a riȝt | e wei | e .

From the next passage we learn Nichol's residence and circumstances. An inquiry after the former obtains the following answer, which shows that if the scholars of the

Hwat, nuȝ | te ȝe | : cwath heo | his hom | .  
 He wuneth at portes-hom .  
 At on | e tun | e : in | e dorset | e .  
 Bi thar | e see | : in or | e ut-let | e .

<sup>1</sup> Works on this subject, or "Bestiaries" as they were called, seem to have been very popular during the 12th and 13th centuries.

<sup>2</sup> [But the other MS. has *leof*, i. e. 'and the nightingale was dear to him.'—W. W. S.]

The two rivals are selecting a judge, to decide between them [Cotton MS., ll. 189-214]:—

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I wot wel, quoth the Nightingale,  
 Thereof need there be no dispute.  
 Master Nichole of Guldevorde,  
 He is wise, and wary of words ;  
 He in judging is right skilful,  
 And hateful to him is every wrong ;  
 He has insight in all songs—  
 Who sings well, who sings badly ;  
 And he can distinguish from the right  
 The wrong—the darkness from the light.

The Owl awhile bethought her,  
 And afterwards this word she spake.  
 I well agree that he should judge us,  
 For though he was whilom proud,  
 And his was the *praise*<sup>2</sup> of the *Nightingale*,  
 And of other creatures gent and small,  
 I wot he is now greatly cooled,  
 For thee he is no longer fooled,  
 So that he, for thy old love,  
 Should put me down, and thee above.  
 Nor shalt thou ever so him please,  
 That he for thee false judgment give ;  
 He is ripe and strong in judgment,  
 Nor welcome to him is any folly ;  
 Now pleaseth him no more to play,  
 He will go a rightful way.

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12th century were sometimes neglected, they were, by no means, backward in obtruding their merits and resenting the affront [ll. 1749-1776].

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What! know ye not, quoth she, his home?  
 He wonneth at Portesham,  
 At a town in Dorset,  
 By the sea, at an outlet,<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Portisham is a parish near Weymouth. The manor and advowson belonged to the monastery of Abbotsbury.

Thar | he dem | eth man | ie : riȝ | te dom | .  
 An diht | an writ | : man | i wisdom | .  
 An thar<sup>1</sup> | his muth | e : an thar<sup>1</sup> | his hond | e .  
 Hit | is the bet | ere : in | to scot-lon | de .  
 To sech | e hin | e : is liht | lich thing | .  
 He nau | eth but | e : on | e woning | .  
 That | his bisch | open : much | el scham | e .  
 An al | le than | that : of | his nom | e .  
 Hab | beth ihert | : an of | his ded | e .  
 Hwi nul | leth hi nim | en : heom | to red | e .  
 That | he wer | e : mid heom | ilom | e .  
 For to tech | e heom | : of his | wisdom | e .  
 An giu | e him ren | te : a ual | e sted | e .  
 That he | miȝte heom : ilom | e be nud | e .<sup>2</sup>  
 Cer | tes cwath | the hul | e : that | is soth | .  
 Theos rich | e men : wel much | e misdoth | .  
 That let | eth than | e : god | e mon | .  
 That of | so feo | le : thing | e con | .  
 An giu | eth rent | e : wel | mislich | e .  
 An | of him let | eth : wel | lihtlich | e .  
 With heor | e cun | ne : heo | beoth mil | dre .  
 An giv | eth rent | e : lit | le chil | dre .  
 Swo heor | e wit | : hi demth | adwol | e .  
 That eu | er abid | : mais | tre nichol | e .

As the thirteenth century advanced, many English poems were written in this metre. Unfortunately the *manuscripts* are for the most part of later date, and as our language began to change in the fourteenth century, few of them can be implicitly relied on, in any question relating to the rhythm. A Cambridge MS. of the thirteenth century<sup>4</sup> contains a fragment of Floriz and Blancheffur, and also a poem on the Assumption of the Virgin.<sup>5</sup> The rhythm is

Among | the lef | dis : in | the sted | e .  
 God | to ser | vi : he hir | e dud | e .

<sup>1</sup> [Read *thurh*, as in Morris's edition; and translate it *by*; literally "through." In the next line, *Hil is* means "it is."—W. W. S.]

<sup>2</sup> That is—his spoken judgments and his written works. Nichol seems to have presided in some ecclesiastical court.

<sup>3</sup> [Read *mide*, as in Morris's edition, and translate—*that he might often be with them*.—W. W. S.]

<sup>4</sup> University Libr. Gg. 4. 27. See p. 418, n. 1.

There he giveth many a judgment just,  
 And maketh and writeth many a piece of wisdom,  
 And there his mouth, and there his hand<sup>2</sup>—  
 They are the best, as far as Scotland!  
 To seek him is an easy thing,  
 He hath but *one* dwelling;  
*That* may his bishops greatly shame,  
 (And all, when they of his name  
 Have heard, and of his works!);  
 Why will they not take thought together  
 That he with them might often be,  
 For to teach them of his wisdom?  
 And give him the rent of some good place  
 That he to them might oft be useful?

Certes, quoth the Owl, that is true;  
 These rich men do much amiss;  
 They pass by the good man,  
 That knoweth of so many things;  
 And give rents with very different view,  
 And of *him* think very lightly;  
 To their kinsmen they be more indulgent,  
 And they give rents to little children!  
 So *their* wit they deem but little,  
 Whosoever wait for Master Nichole.

much looser than in the Hule and Ny3tingale, often varying from the common to the triple measure; and the number of accents is much more uncertain. The following extract, from the second of these poems, shows us the part, which the monks assigned to the Virgin, after the resurrection [ll. 55-77]. St. John, we are told, took her to the temple, and when she came,

---

Among the ladies,<sup>3</sup> in that place,  
 God to serve she made her ready;

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<sup>2</sup> There is another copy of this poem, but with considerable variations, in one of the lately purchased MSS. of the Museum. The MS. is of the 14th century. [It is the Additional MS. 10036. Both copies of this poem were printed by Mr. Lumby, in the same volume with his edition of King Horn.—W. W. S.]

<sup>3</sup> In the later MS. these ladies become *Nuns*.

Thar | bilef | te heo : al hūr | e lif |.  
 Ne lou | ede he : nother fīȝt | ne strif |.  
 Theo | that in : the tem | ple wer | e .  
 Ne mīȝ | te nōȝt | hir | e forber | e .  
 With al | hure mīȝt | e : the whil | e heo was thor | e .  
 Heo ser | vede both | e : las | se and mor | e .  
 Pour | e and sik | e : he dud | e god | .  
 And ser | vede hem | : to hond | and fot | .  
 Pour | e and hung | rie : wel fair | e he fed | de .  
 And sik | e heo broȝ | te : in | here bed | de .  
 Nas | ther non | : so hol | ne fer | .  
 That | to her | : nad | de mester | .  
 Hi lou | ede hūr | e al | le : with her | e mīȝ | te .  
 For | heo ser | uede : hem | wel riȝ | te .  
 He wak | ede mor | e : than | e slep | .  
 Hire son | e to ser | ui : was al | hire kep | .  
 To | him heo clup | ede : with mur | ie <sup>1</sup> stev | ene .  
 And hir | e he sen | te : an aun | gel fram hev | ene .  
 To glad | ie hir | e : him-self | he cam | .  
 Crist | that fless | : of hir | e nam | .

Seint Jon hire kepte, &c.

Several poems were written in this metre during the thirteenth century, among which may be reckoned the romances of Ipomydon, Richard, Kyng Alisaunder, and Havelok;<sup>2</sup> and in all probability that curious satire called the land of Cockaigne,<sup>3</sup> and the Harrowing of Hell.<sup>4</sup> I doubt, however, if there be a MS. of any of these poems, which can date earlier than the year 1300. The rhythm in all of them is loose, and remarkably so in the Alisaunder. The different *fyttes* in this poem are divided by a few lines, containing some general reflection or description, and for the most

<sup>1</sup> The meaning of this word *murie* has been fully discussed in the "Observations upon Mr. Fox's letter to Mr. Grey," a work, which was printed at Cambridge some twenty or thirty years back, for private circulation. In this truly elegant piece of criticism, it is shown, that the *merry* note, which Chaucer attributes to the nightingale, implied nothing more than *sweetness* of sound, so that it is, by no means, inconsistent with the *plaintive* character, which others of our great poets assign to the "nocturnal note." The arguments of the accomplished scholar who wrote it might receive (if they needed any) strong confirmation from the text, for the word *murie* is actually replaced in the other MS. by *rueful*.

<sup>2</sup> The three first of these poems were printed by Weber in his *Metri-*

There liv'd she all her life,  
 Nor lov'd she either fight or strife;  
 They, that in the temple were,  
 Could not with her dispense.  
 With all her might the while she was there,  
 She served both humble and great;  
 To poor and sick she did good,  
 And serv'd them with hand and foot;  
 The poor and hungry right fairly she fed,  
 And the sick she brought unto their bed;  
 Was there none so whole or fair,  
 That need of her had not;  
 They lov'd her all, with all their might,  
 For she serv'd them right well;  
 She watch'd more than she slept;  
 Her son to serve was all her care;  
 To him she called with sweet voice,  
 And to her he sent an angel from heaven;  
 To pleasure her himself he came—  
 Christ! that of her took flesh!  
 St. John maintained her, &c.

part ending with the same rime. In these passages, the rhythm very generally inclines to the triple measure. The following is a specimen.

Av|eril is meor|y : and long|ith the day|  
 Lad|ies lov|en : sol|as and play|  
 Swayn|es, jus|tes : knygh|tis, turnay|  
 Syng|eth the nygh|tyngal|e : gred|eth theo jay|  
 The hot|e sun|ne : chong|eth the clay|  
 As | ye well : yse|en may|

April is merry, and length'neth the day;  
 Ladies love solace and play;

Romances, and the last edited by Sir F. Madden for the Roxburghe Club [and reprinted for the Early English Text Society by Sir F. Madden and myself.—W. W. S.]

<sup>3</sup> Hickes published this poem in his *Thesaurus* [vol. i. p. 231], from a MS. of his friend Tanner—the man, by all antiquaries, “*summo cum honore nominandus*.” There can be little doubt that this MS. is now the Harl. MS. 913; it opens with the satire. [Since reprinted in *Early English Poems*, ed. F. J. Furnivall, 1862, p. 156; and in Mätzner's *Altenglische Sprachproben*, i. 147.—W. W. S.]

<sup>4</sup> Harl. 2253. The poem was published in the *Archæologia*. [See the edition of the poems in MS. Harl. 2253, by Dr. Böddeker.—W. W. S.]

Swains the jousts ; knights the tourney ;  
 Singeth the nightingale ; screameth the jay ;  
 The hot sun changeth the clay ;  
 As ye well may see.—*Alisaunder* (ed. Weber), 139.

The gradual change to the common measure is characteristic of the author's rhythm.

In this romance, the sectional rime is common ; and, as regards the final rime, there is a peculiarity which deserves notice. When the verse is lengthened, the writer often contents himself with a rime between the accented syllables ; making *carpith* answer to *harpe*, l. 5990, and *deontis* to *tent*, l. 1848. This kind of rime is occasionally found in other poems of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, among others in *Havelok*.

The *Alisaunder* was translated partly from the French, and partly from the Latin ; the *Richard* appears to be a loose translation of an earlier Norman poem, and the same was the case with the *Ipomydon* ;<sup>1</sup> but there can be little doubt, that both the Norman and the English versions of *Havelok* are founded on an older poem, of English growth, and probably belonging to the Anglo-Saxon period. The romance (in its present form) appears to have been written

Hwan | he was hos | led and shriv | en  
 His quis | te mak | ed : and for | him gyv | en  
 His knic | tes ded | e : he al | le sit | e  
 For thor | w them | : he wold | e wit | e  
 Hwo mic | te yem | e : his | e chil | dren yung | e  
 Till | that he kouth | en : spek | en wit tung | e  
 Spek | en and gang | en : on hors | e rid | en  
 Knict | es an sweyn | es : bi her | e<sup>2</sup> sid | en  
  
 He spok | en ther-offe : and chos | en son ' e  
 A rich | e man was | : that<sup>3</sup> un | der mon | e

<sup>1</sup> The *Norman* poem was written by Hugh of Rutland (Hue de Roteland).

<sup>2</sup> Laud. 108 [see p. 12 of my edition.—W. W. S.]. The lives of the saints and the other poems which fill up the MS., are mostly written in the southern dialect.

<sup>3</sup> This is clearly a mistake for *here*. [This note refers to the fact that *u*

by a Lincolnshire man, and in the dialect of that county ; but the *manuscript*<sup>2</sup> was probably written in a religious house of some southern county, and to the transcriber may perhaps be imputed such traces of the southern dialect, as are occasionally met with.

This romance has all that interest for an English reader, which must ever attach to an old English story. Whether it be founded on historical fact or not, we know it was most devoutly received as history ; and, I take it, not many generations have passed, since the good folks of Grimsby would but ill have borne any scepticism on the subject. The tale is but a short one, and, in this matter-of-fact age we cannot calculate on the reader's knowledge of such trifles. Grim the fisherman finds a child floating on the waters ; he grows up a hero, and after various adventures turns out to be the son of a Danish king, and marries the daughter of a king of England. The foster-father, with his aid, builds Grimsby. Upon this *myth* is founded the romance, which has some merit merely as a poem, and at one time appears to have enjoyed extraordinary popularity. The following extract may give the reader some notion of its style. It describes the deathbed of King Birkabeyn [ll. 364-397].

---

When he was housled and shriven,  
His bequests made, and for him given,  
His knights he made all sit,  
For from them would he know,  
Who should keep his children young,  
Till they knew how to speak with tongue,  
To speak, and walk, and ride on horse,  
Knights and servants by their side.

They spoke thereof—and chosen soon  
Was a rich man, that, under moon,

---

word was printed *hete* in the former edition of this book. But the MS. itself really has *here*, correctly.—W. W. S.]

<sup>2</sup> [But the word *that* is not in the MS. ; it was evidently caught up from the line following. The best sense would be made by inserting *that* here (omitting *was*), and by reading *as for that* in the next line ; “ a rich man, that under moon was the truest, as they thought.”—W. W. S.]



Was | the trew | est : that | he wen | de  
 God | ard the king | es : oun | e fren | de<sup>1</sup>  
 And | seyde | en he moun | the : hem | best lok | e  
 Yif | that he | : hem un | dertok | e  
 Till | hise son | e : mou | the ber | e  
 Helm | on heu | ed : and le | den ut her | e  
 In | his hand | : a sper | e stark |  
 And king | ben mak | ed : of Denemark |

He | wel trow | ede : that | he sey | de  
 And | on God | ard : hand | es ley | de  
 And sey | de her | e : bitech | e I the |  
 Min | e chil | dren : al | le thre |  
 Al Den | earm | : and al | mi fe |  
 Til | that mi son | e : of hel | de be |  
 But | that ich wil | le : that | thou swer | e  
 On au | ter and | : on mess | e ger | e  
 On | the bel | les : that | men ring | es  
 On mes | se bok | : the prest | on sing | es  
 That thou | mine chil | dren : shalt | we<sup>2</sup> yem' e  
 That hir | e kin | : be ful | wel quem | e  
 Til | mi son | e : mow | e ben knich |  
 Than | ne bitech | e him : tho | his rich |  
 Den | earm | : and that | thetil long | es  
 Cas | teles and toun | es : wod | es and wong | es, &c.

Early in the fourteenth century was written, in nearly the same dialect as Havelok, a version of the psalms<sup>3</sup>—many of them in the metre of four accents. It would not be extravagant praise, to call this one of the best of our English versions; it is indeed a work of singular merit, and some of the psalms are translated with a nerve and spirit, that might do credit even to one of our classical writers.

<sup>1</sup> When the verse is lengthened, we sometimes find the rime confined to the accented syllable, as in the Alisaunder; see p. 433. *Wende* has clearly two syllables, but I never remember seeing *frend* with more than one. The *e* is probably a blunder of the transcriber.

<sup>2</sup> One peculiarity of the dialect is the frequent loss of the *l* final—*we* stands for *well* [or rather, for *wel*].

<sup>3</sup> Vesp. D. vii. [Printed by Mr. Stevenson for the Surtees Society, 1843.—W. W. S.]

<sup>4</sup> If ever our orthography be reformed, the best, because the most familiar.

Was the trueſt that they knew—  
 Godard, the king's own friend ;  
 And ſaid they, *he* might beſt them keep  
 If their charge he undertook,  
 "Till his ſon might bear  
 Helm on head, and lead out hoſt,  
 (In his hand a ſturdy ſpear)  
 And king of Denmark ſhould be made.

He truſted wel to what they ſaid,  
 And on Goddard hands he laid,  
 And ſaid, " Here I entruſt to thee  
 " My children all three,  
 " All Denmark, and all my fee,  
 " Till that of age my ſon ſhall be.  
 " But I would, that thou ſwear,  
 " On altar and on the maſs-gear,  
 " On the bells that men ring,  
 " And on maſs-book from which the prieſt ſings,  
 " That my children thou ſhalt well keep,  
 " So that their kiſmen be well content,  
 " Till my ſon may be knight—  
 " Then give thou him his right,  
 " Denmark, and what thereto pertains,  
 " Caſtles and towns, woods and plains," &c.

---

In the MS., which contains this verſion, the vocal *th* is repreſented by *y*, as *you*, *yi*, *yai*, &c. for *thou*, *thy*, *they*, &c. This is the earlieſt inſtance I have met with, of a mode of ſpelling which ſtill ſurvives ; for inſtance in the abbreviations *y<sup>e</sup>*, *y<sup>m</sup>*, &c. for *the*, *them*, &c.<sup>4</sup>

The following is the verſion of the ſixth psalm. [See Stevenſon's edition, p. 13.]

---

representative of the vocal *th* will be *y*. Our preſent *y* might reſume its old form *ȝ* and ſo prevent all fears of a miſtake.

I think there can be little doubt that the character of this letter has been miſtaken, and that too, by one of the moſt cautious and leaſt ſpeculative of our modern editors. Sir Frederic Madden tells us in his edition of *Havelok*, that he altered ſuch letters as were "manifeſtly false," as "*th* (*þ*) for *w* (*p*), *y* for *th* (*þ*)." There is every likelihood of his having confounded the vocal and the whiſper letters. [See the remarks in my preface to *Havelok*, p. xxxvi.]

Lau | erd ne thret | e me : in | yi<sup>1</sup> wreth |  
 Ne ou | er tak | e me : in | yi breth |  
 Lau | erd haue | : mercy | of me |  
 For | yat sek | e : am I | to se |  
 Hel | e me lau | erd : best | you mai |  
 For al | le mi ban | es : drou | ed`ar yai |  
 And | my saule | : mikel drou | ed isse |  
 Bot | you lau | erd : tow hen | al yisse |  
 Torn lau | erd and | : mi saule | outtak | e  
 For | yi mer | cy : sauf | me mak | e  
 For nocht | es in ded | e : yat is myn | ed of ye |  
 And in hel | le hwa`to | ye : schryv | en sal be |  
 I swank | in mi sigh | ing sted | e  
 I sal wasch | e bi | : al night | es mi bed | e  
 With | mi ter | es : in | mi bed | e  
 Sal | i wet | e : mi lig | ging sted | e  
 Let | es fra wreth | : myn egh | for-yi |  
 Betwex | my faes | : al el | ded I |

Wit | es fra me | : al yat work | es wyk thing |  
 For lau | erd herd steu | en : of mi | wepyng  
 Herd lau | erd besek | ing of me |  
 Lau | erd mi bed | e : kep | id has he |

Yai sham | e and to-dreu | e : al my faes | swiftly |  
 Yai biwent | and sham | e : swith rad | ely |

The verses of three accents, which occur in this and in other poems of the same metre, oppose a formidable obstacle to the hypothesis, which has been suggested at the opening of the chapter. They may be attributed to the influence either of the sectional metres, or of certain very peculiar rhythms which we shall notice more at large, in Chapter IX. The Anglo-Saxon writers sometimes gave a very definite rhythm to their *prose*, and occasionally affected rime in the syllables, which closed the different members of a sentence. We have an example in the following passage, which, there is reason to believe, was written by the sainted Wulstan—the good and venerable

<sup>1</sup> [Here *yi* is printed for *thi*; and so on, throughout the extract.—W. W. S.]

<sup>2</sup> That is, *received it*.

Lord! threaten me not in thy wrath,  
 Nor overtake me with thine anger!  
 Lord! have mercy on me,  
 For that I am sick to see!  
 Heal me, Lord! (best thou may'st)  
 For all my bones, vexed are they!  
 And my soul right vexed is.  
 But thou Lord! change all this;  
 Turn, Lord! and snatch forth my soul,  
 For thy mercy make me whole!  
 For nought is there in death, that is mindful of thee,  
 And in hell who before thee shriven shall be?  
 I have labour'd in my place of sighing,  
 I must wash ev'ry night my bed;  
 With my tears, in my bed,  
 Must I wet my place of lying.  
 Clos'd therefore is mine eye for wrath,  
 Amongst my foes all aged am I!

Hie from me all ye, that work the wicked thing—  
 For the Lord heard the cry of my weeping,  
 The Lord heard my beseeching,  
 The Lord my prayer—he has kept it!<sup>2</sup>

May they be sham'd and wide-driven, all my foes swiftly!  
 May they be turn'd back, and sham'd right speedily!

bishop of Worcester. As it contains a very striking notice of King William [Anno 1086], and as it is curious to see how the writer gradually raises his style, till he gives to prose almost the rhythm of poetry, I shall quote it at some length.

No copy of the Chronicle, within reach, containing the passage, I have extracted it from Dr. Ingram's Edition.<sup>3</sup> The riming syllables are marked in *Italics*, and when two members of a sentence, or (if we may use the term) two *sections* seem closely knit together by the rhythm, their accents are defined in the same way as if they formed a verse.

---

<sup>2</sup> [Corrected by the later edition by the Rev. Prof. Earle, pp. 221.]

— Gif hwa gewilnigeth to gewitane hu gedon man he was . oththe hwilcne wurthscipe he hæfde . oththe hu fela lande he wære hlaford . thonne wille we be him awritan swa swa we hine ageaton . the him onlocodon . and othre hwile on his hirede wunedon . Se cyng Willelm the we embe sprecath was swithe wis man . and swithe rice . and wurthfulre and strengere thone sēig his fore-gengra wære . He was milde than godum mannun the God lufedon . and ofer ealle gemet stearc tham mannun the with-cwædon his willan . On tham ilcan steode the God him geuthe thet he moste Engleland gegán . he rærde mære mynster . &c.

Eac he was swythe wurthful . thiwa he bær his cyne-helm sælc gear . swa oft swa he was on Englelande . on eastron he hine bær on Winceastre . on pentecosten on Westmynstre . on mide winter on Gleawe ceastre . and thænne wæron mid him ealle tha rice menn ofer eall Engla land . arce biscopas . and leod biscopas abbodas and eorlas . thegnas and cnihtas . Swylce he was eac swythe stearc man and ræthe . swa thet man ne dorste nan thing ongean his willan dón . He hælde eorlas in his bendum . the dydan ongean his willan . Biscopas he sætte of heora biscoprice . and abbodas of heora abbodrice . and thegnas on cweartern . and set nextan he ne sparode his agenne brothor , &c.

Betwyx othrum thingum nys na to forgytane thet gode frith the he macode on thisan lande . swa thet án man the himsýlf aht wære mihte faran ofer his rice mid his bosom full goldes ungederad . and nan man ne dorste slean othere man . næfde he næfre swa mycel yfel gedon with thone otherne . &c.

He rixade ofer Englæ land . and hit mid his geaspice swa thurh smeade . thet næs án hid landes innan Englæ lande . thet he nyste hwa heo hæfde . oththe hwæs heo wurth was . and siðthan on his gewrit gesætt . Bryt land him was on gewælde . and he thær inne casteles geworhte . and thet Man cynn mid ealle gewælde . Swylce eac Scotland he him underthædde for his mycele strengthe . Normandige thet land was his gecynde . and ofer thone eorlome the Mans is gehaten he rixade . and gif he moste tha gyt twa gear lybban . he hæfde Yrlande mid his werscipe gewunnon . and withuton ælcon wæpnon .

Witodlice on his timan hæfdon men mycel geswinc . and swithe manig-teonan . Cas | teles | he lét wyrc | ean . and earm | e men swith | e swenc | ean . se cyng was swa swithe stearc . and benam of his undertheoddan man manig marc goldes . and má hundred punda seolfres . thet | he nam | be riht | e . and | mid myc | elan | únriht | e . of | his leod | e . for lit | telre neod | e . he | was on git | sunge | befeal | lan . and græd | ines | se he luf | ode | mid eal | le .

He sæt | te myc | el deor | frith . and | he læg | de lag | a thær | with .<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Some mention of his bounty to the church.

<sup>2</sup> Some account of Odo.

<sup>3</sup> The A.S. *aht* is opposed to the A.S. *naht* vile, naught. It is the O.E. *oht* and the modern *owl* of Lancashire—*nowt that 's owl*, naught that's good.—*Tim Bobbin*, sc. 2.

——If any wish to know what manner of man he was, or what state he held, or of how many lands he was Lord—then will we of him write, as we him knew, we that have waited on him, and other whiles in his court have wonned. The king Willelm, of whom we speak, was a very wise man and very rich, and more stately and powerful than any of his predecessors were. He was mild to the good men, that loved God, and beyond all measure stern to the men that withsaid his will. In the same place, where God granted him that he might England gain, he rear'd a mighty minster, &c.<sup>1</sup>

Eke he was right stately. Thrice he bare his crown each year, as oft as he was in England; at Easter he bare it in Winchester, at pentecost in Westminster, at midwinter in Gloucester; and then were with him all the rich men over all England—archbishops and folk-bishops, abbots and earls, thanes and knights. So was he a right stern man and hot, so that anything against his will durst no man do; he kept earls in his custody, that did aught against his will. Bishops he put from their bishopric, and abbots from their abbacy, and thanes into prison, and at last he spared not his own brother, &c.<sup>2</sup>

Amongst other things should not be forgotten the good peace that he made within this land, so that a man, that himself were aught,<sup>3</sup> might pass through his kingdom, with his bosom full of gold, uninjured. And no man durst slay his fellow-man, had he done never so mickle evil against that other, &c.

He ruled over England, and by his skill so thoroughly scrutinised it, that there was not a hide of land in England, that he wist not who had it, and what it was worth and then put it in his book. Britland was in his power, and he therein built castles, and the Man-people he ruled withal. So eke Scotland he subdued by his mickle strength. The land of Normandy was his by birth; and over the earldom, that is hight Mans, he reigned; and if he might yet have lived two years, he had won Ireland by his prudence,<sup>4</sup> and without any weapons.

Assuredly, in his time, had the people much toil, and very many sufferings. Castles he let men build, and the poor people sorely harass. The king was so very stern! And he took from his liege-man many a mark of gold, and moreover many a hundred of pounds of silver. That he took, with right—and with mickle *unright*—from his people, with little need. He was fallen into covetousness, and greedyness he loved withal.

He laid out a mickle deer-forest, and he laid down laws therewith—

<sup>1</sup> *Werescipe* may mean the reputation of one's manhood, as *eorlscipe* means the reputation of a great leader or earl; see p. 377, n. 19. But I rather think, in the present case, that it is merely a corruption of *warescipe*.

<sup>2</sup> I think the proper accentuation would be *thar with*, but the writer clearly intended it to rime with *deor* | *frith*.

Thet swa | hwa swa slog | e heort | oththe hind | e. Thet hin | e man  
 sceol | de blend | ian. He | forbead | tha heort | as . swylc | e eac | tha  
 bar | as . swa swith | e he luf | ode | tha hea | *deór* . swylc | e be war | e  
 heor | a *fæd* | er . Eac | he sæt | te be | tham har | an . Thet | hi mos -  
 ten freo far | an . his ric | e men | hit mænd | on . and | tha earm | e men  
 hit beceór | odon . ac | he (wæs) | swa *stith* | .<sup>1</sup> thet | he ne roht | e  
 heora eall | ra *nith* | . ac | hi mos | ton mid eal | le . thes cyng | es wil | e  
 folg | ian . gif | hi wol | don *lib* | ban . oth | the land hab | ban . land  
 oththe eah | ta . oth | the wel | his *seht* | a. Wa | la~~wa~~ .<sup>1</sup> thet ænig man  
 sceol | de mod | igan swa . hin | e self | upp aheb | ban and o | fer eal le  
 men tel | lan . Se ælmihtig | a God cyth | æ his saul | e mild | heortas se .  
 and do | him his syn | na forgif | enes | se .

I cannot help thinking that this rhythmical prose was one of the instruments in breaking up the alliterative system of the Anglo-Saxons. Its influence may be traced in the rhythm of Layamon; and I think it must also, in some instances, have modified the metre, whose properties we are now investigating. The connexion between them may perhaps be made plainer, if we examine the rhythm of

Sain | te Mar | ie | virgin | e  
 Mod | er Jhes | u Cris | tes Naz | aren | e  
 Onfo | schild | help | thin Godric |  
 Onfang | bring heg | elich with | the in God | es rich | e

Sain | te Mar | ie cris | tes bur |  
 Maid | enes clen | had mod | eres flur |  
 Dil | ie min sin | ne rix | in min mod |  
 Bring | me to win | ne with the | self god |

In the second of these staves (if we may so term them) each verse divides itself into two regular sections; <sup>2</sup> but the rhythm of the first stave can hardly be distinguished from that of the prose we have just been noticing. In this kind of rhythm were also written the verses, which are found in

<sup>1</sup> No metrical point. [The MS. omits *wæs*; according to Prof. Earle, there is a metrical point, both after *stith* and *walawa*.—W. W. S.]

<sup>2</sup> I have taken my copy from the King's MS. 5 F. VII.

that whoso slew hart or hind, that him they should blind. He forbade to kill the harts, so also the boars. As strongly he lov'd the great game, as though he had been their father. Eke he made laws for the hares, that they should freely pass. His rich men bemoan'd it, and the poor men murmur'd at it; but he was so stern, that he reck'd not all their hate; but they must, withal, the king's will follow, if they would live, or land have—land or possessions, or even his piece. Walawa! that any man should be so proud! himself uplift, and over all men vaunt! may the almighty God show to his soul mercy, and grant him of his sins forgiveness!

certain verses, that were written in the early half of the twelfth century.

The following hymn to the virgin is attributed<sup>2</sup> to St. Godric, who died at Finchale near Durham in the year 1174, after living the life of a hermit, in that sheltered and leafy nook, some sixty years.

Saint Mary! Virgin!  
 Mother of Jesu Christ the Nazarene!  
 Take, shield, help thy Godric!  
 Take, bring him speedily with thee to God's realm.

Saint Mary! Christ's bower!  
 Maiden's purity! the mother's flower!  
 Hide my sin! reign in my heart!  
 Bring me to joy, with thyself good!

the Book of Ely. The monk, who wrote the MS. in 1170, tells us they were made by king Knut, as he approached the isle, on one of the great festivals; they were probably composed not long after the year 1100.

<sup>2</sup> In the two last verses we should also notice the rime between *sinne* and *winne*; if this be not accidental, it is the first instance, I have met with, of an interwoven rime in our language.



Mer|ie sung|en the mun|eches bin|nen Ely|  
 Tha Cnut | ching reu | ther by|  
 Row|eth kniht|es noer | the lant|  
 And her|e we | thes mun|eches sang|

---

After all, the formation of this metre shows itself under such different aspects, when seen from different points of view, that a writer, who should exclusively adopt any one hypothesis, might give better proof of his courage, than of his prudence. Whatever be its origin—whether the stream has flowed from one source, and coloured its waters with the strata over which it passed—or resulted from the union of two or more independent streamlets, which, in blending their waters, have mixed their properties—it will be admitted, on all hands, that no license should be granted in any classical metre, which is clearly adverse to the usual

Sweetly sung the monks in Ely,  
When Knut king row'd thereby,  
"Row, knights, near the land,  
"And hear we these monks' song.

---

flow of the rhythm, or strikingly inconsistent with its general character. On this ground, I would still venture to uphold the criticism, which was hazarded in a former chapter.<sup>1</sup> I must still think that the middle pause is *essential* to this metre; or—to say the least—that when, as in the Allegro and Penseroso, the rhythm has brought it prominently under notice, it cannot be, at pleasure, abandoned. With this exception, the versification of these poems is as exquisite as the poetry; and as to *that* there can be but one opinion—had Milton written nothing else, his name must have been immortal.

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<sup>1</sup> Pages 148 to 157.

## CHAPTER V.

## OLD ENGLISH ALLITERATIVE METRE. .

IN the course of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries many poems were written in a metre, which exhibits all the more essential properties of our Anglo-Saxon rhythms. Each verse may be divided into two sections; the first of which contains *two*, and the latter *one* accented syllable, marked with the alliteration.<sup>1</sup> It differs from the alliterative couplet of the Anglo-Saxons in the nature of its pauses, the middle pause being always subordinate to the final; in its greater length, the number of accents being generally 5 or 6, very seldom indeed so few as 4; and in the greater comparative importance of the first section, which has generally more accents than the second. All these points of difference may, I think, be attributed to the influence of the Psalm-metres, of which we shall have more to say in the next chapter.

That an alliterative metre, like the present, should have resulted from the causes which were then in action, might have been expected; but the sudden manner in which it seems to have started into existence, is by no means easy to account for. The year 1360 is the earliest date we can *positively* assign to any poem in this metre; and I know of none which we can, with any show of reason, suppose to have been written more than twenty or thirty years earlier. If we consider Layamon as an alliterative poet, here is a gap

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<sup>1</sup> In place of an obscure or obsolete word, the copyists would often substitute some *gloss*; and, from the liberty thus taken, the alliteration has in many cases suffered. The rule given in the text agrees with that laid down by Crowley, in his edition of *Piers Plowman*, A. D. 1550, that there must be "*three wordes, at the leaste, in every verse, whiche beginne with some one letter.*" We seldom find the rule violated in the older MSS.

of nearly two centuries; and, if we deny him that character, of more than two centuries and a half, since the last known date of any regular alliterative poem.

It is, I think, not improbable that alliterative rhythm may have yielded, in the south,<sup>1</sup> to the more fashionable novelties of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries; and have kept its place in the north and west, till the success of Langland again made it one of our classical metres. This hypothesis would account for the blank, which breaks in upon the series of our alliterative poems; and must, if admitted, in some measure lessen our hopes of regaining what is lost.

There are, however, critics who go much further, and consider this metre an *invention* of the fourteenth century. Warton, with some hesitation, would yield the honour to Langland; but, as William and the Werwolf was certainly written before the Vision of Piers Ploughman, the claim, which its editor<sup>2</sup> seems half inclined to make in favour of *his* author, is certainly the better founded of the two. In his preface he quotes the following verses [p. xxij. of Skeat's edition],

In this wise hath William al his werke ended,  
As fully as the Frensche fully wold aske,  
And as his witte him wold serve though it were febul.  
But though the metur be nouzt made at eche mannes paye,  
Wite him nouzt that it wrouzt; he wold have do beter,  
3if is wite in eny wei3es wold him have served.

In this way hath William ended all his work,  
As fully as the French text would require it to be done;  
And as his wit would serve him (though that indeed be feeble).  
*But though the metre be not made to each man's content,*  
Blame not him that made it, he would have done better,  
If his wit, in any way, would have served him.

from which he infers, that "the alliterative form of Alexan-

<sup>1</sup> The reader need hardly be reminded of Chaucer's lines,

But trusteth wel, I am a *southern* man,

I cannot geste *rim*, *ram*, *ruf*, by letter.

*Cant. Tales*, 17353.

<sup>2</sup> [Sir F. Madden. The poem was re-edited by myself for the Early English Text Society in 1867, with the title William of Palerne.—W. W. S.]

drine verse had not yet become popular, and was, in fact, but lately introduced." But surely the language of the poet is not that of a man, who is *beforehand* with his hearers. He seems rather to fear the censures of a *critical* audience—one, that might be ill-satisfied with an old-fashioned rhythm, or at any rate alive to the slightest violation of a metre, that had probably been familiar to them from childhood.

William's patron, Humphrey Bohun, Earl of Hereford, is twice mentioned as still living. As he succeeded to the earldom in 1335, and died in 1361, the romance must have

---

Hit | bifel | in that for | est : ther | e fast | by sid | e  
 Ther won | ed a wel | old cherl | : that was | a cou' herde  
 That fel | e win | terres in | that for | est : fayr | e had ke | pud  
 Men | nes ken | of the cun | tre : as | a com | en herd | e,  
 And thus | it bitid | e that tim | e : as tel | len our | e bok | es  
 This cow | herd com | es on | a tim | e : to kep | en is bes | tes  
 Fast | by sid | e the bor | w3 : ther | e the barn | was in | ne  
 The herd | had with | him an hound | : his hert | to li3t |  
 For | to bay | te on his bes | tes : wan | ne thai | to brod | e went |  
 The herd | sat than | with hound | : a3en | e the hot | e sun | ne  
 Nou3t ful | ly a fur | long : fro | that fayr | e child |  
 Clou3 | tand kynd | ely | his schon | : as | to here craft | fal | les  
 That whil | e was | the wer | wolf : went | a bout | e his pray | e  
 What | beho | ued to | the barn | : to bring | as he mi3t |

The child | than dark | ed in | his den | : dern | ly him on | e  
 And was | a big | bold barn | : and brem | e of his ag | e  
 For spak | ly spek | e it couth | e tho | : and sped | elich | e to-waw | e  
 Lou | ely lay | it along | : in | his lon | ely den | ne  
 And bus | kede him out | of the busch | ys : that | were blow | ed gren | e  
 And leu | ed ful lov | ely : that lent | grete schad | e  
 And brid | des ful brem | ely : on | the bow | es sing | e  
 What | for mel | odye that | thei mad | e : in | the mey | se | soun  
 That lit | el child lis | tely : lork | ed out | of his cau | e  
 Fair | e flour | es for | to fecch | e : that he | bi-for | e him sey | e  
 And | to gad | ere of | the gras | es : that gren | e wer | e and fayr | e  
 And whan | it was | out went | : so wel | hit him lik | ed  
 The sa | uor of | the swet | e se | soun : and song | of the brid | des

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<sup>1</sup> By command of "La Contesse Yolent," daughter of Baldwyn, Earl of Hainault. One MS. of the French version, and I believe the only one now

been written sometime between these two dates. It was a translation of a French tale, which had itself been translated from the Latin in the twelfth century ; <sup>1</sup> and may, perhaps, be looked upon as the oldest specimen of this metre, that has yet been discovered.

The MS. is of the fourteenth century. The middle pause is *not* marked ; and the opening of the tale is missing. The child, who plays the hero, has been carried off by the Werwolf to a distant forest, and hidden in the beast's den. His discovery by the cowherd is told as follows [ll. 3-53].

---

It chanced in that forest (fast beside it)  
There dwelt a right old churl, that was a cowherd,  
That many winters, in that forest, had fairly tended  
Men's cattle, of the neighbourhood, as a common herd.  
And thus it chanced that time (as our books tell us)  
This cowherd comes, on a time, to tend his beasts,  
Fast beside the hole, wherein the child was.  
The herdsman had with him a hound, to glad his heart,  
And to set on his beasts, when they ranged too widely.  
The herdsman sat then with his hound in the warm sunshine,  
Not quite a furlong from that fair child,  
Clouting as usual his shoon (as is the custom of their craft).  
That time was the werwolf gone about his prey,  
To bring, as he might, what was needful for the child.

The child then lurk'd in his den, all secretly alone,  
And was a big bold barn, and strong for his age ;  
For readily could it speak then, and quickly move about.  
Lovely lay it along in its lonely den !  
And he gat him out of the bushes, that were greenly blow'd,  
And leaved full lovely, so that they gave great shade.  
And the birds right shrilly sing on the boughs !  
Forsooth for the melody that they made in the [May] season,  
That little child, with joy, crept out of his cave,  
Fair flowers to fetch that he saw before him ;  
And to gather some of the grasses, that were green and fair.  
And when he had gone forth, so well it pleas'd him,  
The savour of the sweet season, and the song of the birds,

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extant, is in the King's library at Paris. [It has been edited by M. Michelant, with the title *Guillaume de Palerne*.—W. W. S.]

That ferd | e fast | a bout | e : flour | es to gad | ere  
And layk | ed him long | while : to lest | en that merth | e

The cou | herdes hound | that tim | e : as hap | pe by-tid | de  
Feld fout | e of the child : and fast | thider ful | wes  
And son | e as | he it sei3 | : soth | e for | to tel | le  
He gan | to berk | e on that barn | : and to bai | e it hold |  
That | it war nei3 | of his witt | : wod | for fer | e  
And com | sed than | to cry | e : so ken | ly and schil | le  
And wep | te so won | der fast | : wit | e thou | for soth | e  
That | the son | of the cry | : com | to the cow | herde eu | ene  
That | he wist wit | erly | : it was | the voys | of a child | e

Than ros | he up rad | ely : and ran | thider swith | e  
And drow | him toward | the den | : by | his dog | ges noye e  
Bi | that tim | e was | the barn | : for ber | e of that houn | de  
Draw | e him in | to his den | : and dark | ed ther stil | le  
And wept | eu | ere as | it wol | de : a-wed | e for fer | e  
And eu | ere the dog | ge at the hol | e : held | it at | a-bay | e  
And whan | the kou | herd com | thide(r) : he kour | ed low | e  
To | bi | hold | in at | the hol | e : whi | his hound | berk | yd  
Than | ne of-saw | he ful son | e : that sem | liche child |  
That | so lou | elich | e lay | and wep | : in that loth | ly cau | e  
Cloth | ed ful com | ly : for an | y kud king | es son | e  
In god | e cloth | es of gold | : a-greth | ed ful rich | e  
With per | rey and pel | lure, &c.

Many other alliterative romances appear to have been written in the course of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. One of the earliest of these may be the poem, which is found at the end of the *Roman d'Alexandre*, in the Bodleian Library.<sup>1</sup> Its subject is Alexander's visit to the Gymnosophists, and it was avowedly added for the purpose of supplying an omission in the French romance. It contains more than 1200 verses; and was probably written not long after the French poem was transcribed, perhaps about the middle of the fourteenth century. Another alliterative

<sup>1</sup> Bodl. MSS. B. 264. The poem I have merely glanced over, but have seen enough to show me the gross inaccuracy of Warton's quotation. Verses run into each other, and the common word *hem* (them) is rendered *hwi*. Frece should have corrected these blunders. [See my edition of this poem, published for the Early English Text Society in 1878, with the title *Alexander and Diogenes*.—W. W. S.]

<sup>2</sup> Ashm. MSS. 44. This MS. I have not seen. According to Warton it is

That he rambled fast about, flowers to gather,  
And amused him long while with listening to that merry-making.

The cowherd's hound that time, as chanc'd to happen,  
Caught scent of the child, and follow'd fast thitherward.  
And soon as he sees him, the sooth to tell,  
He gan to bark upon that child, and to hold it at bay,  
So that it was nigh out of its wits, mad for fear;  
And gan then to cry so keenly and shrilly,  
And wept so wondrously fast (for sooth believe it)  
That the sound of the cry reach'd even to the cowherd,  
So that he knew right well it was the voice of a child.

Then rose he up speedily, and ran thither quickly,  
And drew him toward the den, guided by the noise of his dog.  
By that time had the child, on account of the hound's baying,  
Withdrawn him into the den, and there lurk'd without stirring,  
And wept ever as it would go mad for fear;  
And ever the dog at the hole held it at bay.  
And when the cowherd came thither, he cower'd low,  
To look in at the hole, why his dog barked.  
Then saw he full soon that beautiful child,  
That so lovely lay and wept, in that loathly cave,  
Clothed full comely, fit for any far-famed king's son,  
In good clothes of gold trick'd out full richly  
With jewels and fur, &c.

poem, relating to Alexander, is found among the Ashmolean MSS.<sup>2</sup> Warton [erroneously] "believed" this to be the same as the one last mentioned; but it does not appear that his belief was founded on any examination of the manuscript.

One of the Cotton MSS.<sup>3</sup> contains a string of Scripture histories, written in this metre; such as the story of Noah, of Abraham and the three Angels, of Daniel, and of Jonah. The poem is, for several reasons, curious, and especially so to the philologist; but I do not think it of much earlier

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divided into 27 passus, according to Whitaker (or rather Conybeare), into 16 cantos. See Preface to Whitaker's *Piers Ploughman*. [Edited by Mr. Stevenson for the Roxburghe Club in 1849; and now being reprinted by myself.—W. W. S.]

<sup>2</sup> Nero, A. x. [Printed by Dr. Morris for the Early English Text Society, in 1864.—W. W. S.]



date than the manuscript, which certainly belongs to the latter half of the fourteenth century. Another Cotton MS.<sup>1</sup> the date of which may be some forty or fifty years later, furnishes us with two alliterative romances, the "Chevalere

---

Vaspasiane dressede hym fro his bedde : and arayde him fayre  
 Fro the foote to the forhedde : in fyne cloth of golde  
 And aftur putteth that prince : aboue his gay a ray  
 An haburione browdered thikke : wit a brest plate

The grate on the graye steel : was of golde ryche  
 Ther on castede he a cote : of color of his armes  
 And a grete gyrdell of golde : wit oute gere more  
 He leyde on his lendes : wit lachettes full monye

A bry3te burnysched swerde : he gyrdeth him a bowte  
 Of pure polyached golde : bothe pomell and hyltes  
 A brode shynynge schelde : on his schulder he hanged  
 And bokeled wit bry3te golde : a bouen at the nekke

The gloves of graye steele : wit golde were hemmed  
 When he was a rayde thus : his hors sone he asked  
 The golde heweid helme : him was brow3te thenne after  
 Wit visor and ventayle : avysed for the nones

And a crowne of clene golde : was closed a bouen  
 Rayled rounde a boutte the helme : full of ryche stones  
 Pyrte prowdeley wit perlis : the helme rounde a bowte  
 And with safyres sette : the sythes to and fro

He stryde on a stiffe steede : and styred on the grounde  
 Ly3te as a lyon were losed<sup>2</sup> : of his cheyne  
 His menne sy3e hym eche oone : and euery manne sayde to other  
 This is a komely kynge : kny3tes to lede.

He pryked to the barres : ere he a byde wolde  
 And beteth on wit his swerde : that the brasse ryngedde  
 Cometh out 3e kaytyfes he seyde : that cryste slewe  
 And knowe hym for 3or god : ore ye cacche more.

3e may fette 3ou no foode : thogh 3e dye schulde  
 And also to 3or watyr : wynne 3e maye nevere

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<sup>1</sup> Cal. A. 11.

<sup>2</sup> There is another version of this poem in the metre of 4 accents, which appears to have been made by Adam Davie, early in the fourteenth century. [In MS. Laud 622. There is no reason for attributing it to Adam Davy; see preface to Adam Davy's *Five Dreams*, &c., ed. F. J. Farnivall, 1878, p. 7. The alliterative *Sege of Jerusalem* is still unprinted (1881).—W. W. S.]

Assigne," and the "Sege<sup>2</sup> of Jerusalem." A short extract from the latter will enable us to compare the costly habiliments of the fifteenth century with the simpler toilet, which contented "fair knighthood" in the twelfth.<sup>3</sup>

Vespasian gat him from his bed, and array'd him fairly,  
From the foot to the forehead, with fine cloth of gold.  
And afterwards that prince putteth above his gay array  
A habergeon thickly embroider'd, and a breastplate ;

The grit,<sup>4</sup> on the gray steel, was of rich gold.  
Thereon he cast a coat, of the colour of his arms ;  
And a great girdle of gold, without more apparel,  
He laid on his loins with ties full many.

A bright burnish'd sword he girdeth about him  
Of pure polish'd gold, both pummel and hilt.  
A broad shining shield on his shoulder he hung,  
And buckled with bright gold above at his neck.

The gloves of gray steel with gold were hemm'd.  
When he was thus arrayed his horse soon he ask'd for.  
The gold-colour'd helm was then afterwards brought him,  
With visor and ventaile, prepared for the nonce.

And a crown of clear gold was encircled above,  
Circled round about the helm, full of rich stones ;  
Proudly fix'd with pearls, round about the helm,  
And set with saphyrs to and fro the sides.

He steppeth upon a stiff steed, and pranced on the earth,  
Light as a lion, that were loosed from his chain.  
His men saw him each one, and every man said to other,  
" This is a comely king, knights to lead."

He prick'd to the gates, ere he would stop,  
And beateth on them with his sword, so that the brass rung again.  
" Come out ye caitifs, that slew Christ,  
" And know him for your God, ere ye suffer more  
" Ye may fetch you no food, though ye should die for't,  
" And also to your water never may ye get.

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<sup>3</sup> See p. 411.

<sup>4</sup> The *grit* was the metal worked into the steel.

<sup>5</sup> Here the middle pause is misplaced in the MS It ought to have followed the word *lyon*.

A droope thogh 3e dye schulde : dayes in 3or lyue  
The pale<sup>1</sup> that here pyght is : passe who so may.

It is full bygge at the banke : and hath 3or cyte closed  
For that fowrty menne to fy3te : a3ens five houndred  
Thogh 3e were deueles echon ; a3eyn turne 3e schull  
And 3ette more worshyppe hit were : mercy to be seche.

Then for to marre meteless : ther no myght helpyth  
Ther were none to speke on worde : but waited her tyme  
If any styrte out a straye : wit stones to kyll  
Wroth as a wylde bore : he wendeth his brydell

Thogh 3e dye as dogges : the devell have that rekketh  
And thogh I wende fro the wall : 3e shull a byde me here  
And ofte spedelyer speke : ere I 3or speche here 3c.

The right scansion of these verses is a matter of difficulty, owing to the license taken in the use of the *e* final. This letter is sometimes used for the mere purposes of orthography, and sometimes forms an integral portion of the word ; and, in the latter case, it is sometimes pronounced and sometimes mute. As there are other difficulties arising from blunders of transcription,<sup>2</sup> I thought it safer to leave these verses without scanning them.

The poem is divided into staves, after the model, it would seem, of the psalm-metres ; but as the rhythm is very slightly, if at all, affected by this division, I have treated it as a specimen of the common alliterative metre.

The latest alliterative tale yet discovered, is the "Scottish Field," written by Leigh of Baguleigh, soon after the year 1515. It was found in the Percy MS. ; and, according to the editor, contains a very curious and detailed account of the Scottish invasion, which ended with the battle of Flodden. It were to be wished he had been more copious in his extracts.<sup>3</sup>

But the most valuable specimens of this metre are to be found in the satires and allegories, which the success of

<sup>1</sup> *Pale*, (*peel*, in the northern dialect,) originally meant an earthen work, but was afterwards used for any small fortalice, of whatever materials constructed.

"Not a drop (though ye should die for't) all the days of your life,  
 "The pale<sup>1</sup> that here is fix'd, let him pass whoso may ;

"It is full large at the bank, and hath your city enclosed,  
 "So that forty men might fight against five hundred,  
 "Though ye were devils each one, turn and meet me ye should,  
 "And yet more worthy thing it were to ask for mercy,

"Than to waste without meat, where no strength availeth."  
 There were none to speak one word, but they waited their time,  
 If any stray'd out from shelter, with stones to kill him.  
 Wroth as a wild boar he turneth his bridle,

"Though ye die as dogs, the devil have him that recketh,  
 "And though I turn from the wall, ye shall abide me here,  
 "And speak often and more readily, ere I your speech hear."

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Langland appears to have called into existence. They are valuable not only as pictures of manners, but as showing the prevailing modes of thinking, and the currents of public opinion. The work of Langland is also curious, as being the product of a rich and powerful mind, drawing upon its own stores, unaided (perhaps I might have said unfettered) by rule and precedent. When carefully examined, it will not be found wanting in the important quality of *unity*, the absence of which so much lessens our enjoyment of many contemporary poems; but the execution of the work is certainly superior to its conception, and shows indeed a wonderful versatility of genius. A high tone of feeling is united to the most searching knowledge of the world; sarcastic declamation is succeeded by outpourings of the most delicate poetry; and broad humour or homespun mother-wit by flights, which neither Spenser nor Milton have disdained to follow.

The author's *name* is first mentioned by Bale, in the year 1559. This writer styles him Robert Langland, a native of Mortimers Cleobury, in Shropshire; and is confirmed, both as to name and birth-place, by Holinshed, who also calls him

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<sup>2</sup> How faulty this copy must be, we may partly learn from the imperfect alliteration. [There are other copies.—W. W. S.]

<sup>3</sup> [It is all printed in the edition of the Percy Folio MS., ed. Hales and Furnivall.—W. W. S.]

a secular priest. But according to Stow and Wood, he was named John Malvern, and was Fellow of Oriel; and, according to the latter, a Worcestershire man. Wood also tells us, that he became a Benedictine at Worcester, and was by some persons called Robert Langland.

It is very unlikely that the name and history of our most popular poet (after Chaucer) should be matter of dispute within a century and a half of his death. Both these, seemingly conflicting, accounts may be true, and may be reconciled, as it appears to me, without much difficulty. The poet's christian name of Robert may, according to a common practice, have been changed into John when he entered the monastery. As to his surname of Langland, this may have been taken from the farm where he was born; and as he makes Malvern (which was then as important an ecclesiastical station as it still is a striking object in the landscape) the scene of his vision, we may readily understand how the surname, derived from an obscure homestead, was supplanted by one so familiar to his fellow-monks of Worcester. As Cleobury, moreover, lies on the borders of Worcestershire, Wood's mistake, in calling him a native of that shire, is easily accounted for.

Another difficulty was started by Tyrwhitt. In some MSS. the title of the work is *Visio Wil' de Piers Plowman*, and the sleeper throughout is addressed by the name of *Wille*.<sup>1</sup> To write however in a fictitious character was agreeable to the spirit of the age; and the dreamer's name of William, his house on Cornhill, and his daughters, Kitty and Calot, are, I believe, as much inventions of the poet, as the dream itself.

The popularity of this writer is shown by the many copies, which are still extant, of his Visions. But the variations

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<sup>1</sup> Ritson attempted, very ingeniously, to get over the difficulty, by melting down *Wille* into an abstraction, "a personification of the mental faculty," and by considering the *title* a mistake, arising from the misapprehension of the copyist. But, unfortunately, in some MSS. instead of *Wille*, we have the name at full length, *William*. [The reader should consult my editions of *Piers Plowman*, especially the preface to the edition of the Prologue and Passus I. to VII., as published for the Clarendon Press. — W. W. S.]

between them are so many and important, that neither difference of dialect, nor carelessness on the part of the copyist, will satisfactorily account for them. One set of these MSS. agree[s] well with the early printed editions; and a second may be represented by the modern edition of Mr. Whitaker. As there are copies, in both sets, which clearly belong to the fourteenth century, and were probably written during the lifetime of the author, it has been conjectured, that Langland himself revised the poem; and, according to Whitaker, *his* copy exhibits the poem as it first came from the hands of its author. But Price found this satire, as it were, in outline,<sup>1</sup> in the Harl. MS. 6041. Though the *copy* be a late one, the poem shows all the freshness of invention; few of the episodes are inserted, and many passages but slightly touched, which, in all the printed editions, are worked up with much particularity of detail.

From this copy I have hitherto quoted;<sup>2</sup> and, had space allowed, it was my intention to have extracted the first *passus*, which answers to the first and second of the printed editions. In the *fifth* *passus* are to be found the verses<sup>3</sup> which refer to the "south-west wind, on Saturday at eve;" and which fix the date of the poem.<sup>4</sup> There is therefore little doubt that the poem, even in this its earliest form, was not written before the year 1362.

Piers Plouhman's *Crede* is generally coupled with Langland's Visions. It must have been written after the year 1384, for Wiclif is mentioned as no longer living. This

<sup>1</sup> [That is, there are really *three* versions of the poem. All three have been edited by me for the Early English Text Society.—W. W. S.]

<sup>2</sup> [It is so poor a MS. that I have occasionally corrected the quotations by help of better copies.—W. W. S.]

<sup>3</sup> They are found in the *sixth* *passus* of the printed editions.

<sup>4</sup> Tyrwhitt, with the sagacity that was natural to him, and which, if it had been equally shown in his philological speculations, would have fully entitled him to Whitaker's epithet *κρίκνωτατος*, pointed out a passage in the *Decem Scriptores*, c. 21, &c. which records, that on the 15th day of January, 1362, "*circa horam vesperrarum ventus vehemens notus australis africanus tantâ rabie erupit, &c.*" The 15th of January was a *Saturday*: and Langland, we may infer, during this winter was writing his Visions. [But this only fixes the date of the *first* or *earliest* version.—W. W. S.]

however is the extent of our knowledge; the author's name or circumstances are alike unknown.<sup>1</sup>

With these poems may be classed the allegory in the Percy MS. called *Life and Death*; and the Vision, which the learned editor extracted from "a small 4to MS. in private hands." The former of these poems was probably written a short time before, and the latter a short time after the year 1400.<sup>2</sup> Dunbar's *Twa marriit Women and the Wedo*, may have been written about the year 1500. Its wit is more than equalled by its grossness.

Besides the alliterative poems already mentioned, there are others which are divided into *staves*. Strictly, perhaps, these ought not to be noticed in the present book; but, as it is important to take one general view of our alliterative metre, the rule may, I think, in this instance, be departed from with more advantage than inconvenience.

Of these poems one of the most curious is found in the Cotton MS. Nero, A. x. It is quoted by Mr. Stevenson and Sir F. Madden, under the title of "Gawayn and the Green Knight," and is referred to by Price, as "the Aunter of Sir Gawain." All reference to their MS. is carefully avoided by these writers,<sup>3</sup> and possibly there may be copies

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Ful er|ly befor|e the day|: the folk | uprys|en  
 Ges|tes that go | wolde : hor grom|es they cal|den  
 And | thay bus|ken up | bily|ue : blonk|ke3 to sad|el  
 Tyf|fen her tak|les : trus|sen her mal|es  
 Rich|en hem | the rych|est : to ryd|e alle arayd|e  
 Lep|en up ly3t|y : lach|en her bryd|eles

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<sup>1</sup> [The date is about 1394. I have proved that the author was the same person as the author of the *Plowman's Tale* once attributed to Chaucer, but certainly not his. I have edited the poem for the *Early English Text Society*.—W. W. S.]

<sup>2</sup> [Not so. *Life and Death*, now printed by Hales and Furnivall in their edition of the Percy Folio MS., is by the author of *Flodden Field*, and therefore belongs to the reign of Henry VIII. See p. 454. Again, the "Vision" here mentioned is the poem of the Crowned King, written in 1415. It has been printed by me from the Douce MS. 95 (now in the Bodleian Library), as the end of the C-text of *Piers Plowman*.—W. W. S.]

<sup>3</sup> Price certainly intended to publish this poem, and therefore his jealousy

of the poem, which have escaped my notice. As Price uses a title, which is found in Wynton's Chronicle, he would probably, like Wynton, have attributed the poem to "Huchown," or Hugh. The riming chronicler quotes the "Gest hystoriale," of one "Huchown of the Awle ryale," who

——— made the gret Gest of Arthure,  
 And the *Awntyre of Gawayn*,  
 The Pistil als of Swete Susane.  
 He wes curyows in his style,  
 Fair of Facund, and subtile;  
 And ay to plesans of delyte,  
 Made in meeter meit his dyte.

As Wynton wrote about the year 1420, Hugh may have flourished at the close of the fourteenth century.<sup>4</sup> He is certainly the oldest English poet, born north of Tweed, whose works have reached us. His stave is peculiar to him; and consists of an irregular number of verses, separated by a kind of wheel, or burthen. The following passage [ll. 1126-1177], which describes a grand hunting party, contains two of these staves; and will give the reader a more correct notion of their peculiarities than any description. The middle pause is not marked in the MS.

Full early before the day, the folk uprise;  
 Guests, that wish'd to go, their grooms they call'd,  
 And they busk up quickly, their greys<sup>5</sup> to [saddle],  
 They tiff<sup>6</sup> their tackle-gear, truss their males,  
 Rig themselves out most richly, to ride all array'd;  
 They leap up lightly, and catch their bridles,—

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with respect to the MS. is readily understood; may we infer that the other two have the same intention? [The inference, in *one* instance, proved correct. It was printed by Sir F. Madden. It has been reprinted by Dr. Morris for the E. E. T. S.—W. W. S.]

<sup>4</sup> [The authorship of Gawain and the Grene Knight is still unsettled. We only know that he wrote the three Alliterative Poems, edited by Dr. Morris in 1864.]

<sup>5</sup> The word *blonk* means properly a grey horse; but it was afterwards used as a general name for that animal.

<sup>6</sup> To *tiff*, to deck out, to dress, is still a common word in several of our counties.



Uch|e wy3|e on his way|: ther | hym wel | liked  
 The leu|e lord | of the lon|de : wat3 | not the last|  
 Aray|ed for | the ryd|yng : with renk|ke3 ful mon|y  
 Et|e a sop has|tyly : when | he had|e herde mas|se  
 With bu|gle to bent|-felde : he bus|ke3 by-lyu|e  
 By that | that an|y day-ly3t|: lem|ed up|on erth|e  
 He | with his hath|eles : on hy3|e hors|ses wer|en  
 Then|ne thise cach|eres that couth|e : cowp|led hor houn|de3  
 Unclos|ed the ken|el dor|e : and cal|de hem ther-out|e  
 Blwe byg|ly in bug|le3 : thre bar|e-mot|e  
 Brach|es bay|ed ther-for|e : and brem|e noys|e mak|ed  
 And | they chas|tysed | and char|red : on chas|yng that went|  
 A hun|dreth of hun|teres : as | I haf herde<sup>1</sup> | tel|le  
 of | the best|

To trys|tors vew|ters 3od|  
 Coup|les hun|tes of-kest|  
 Ther ros | for blas|te3 god|e  
 Gret rurd | in that | forest|

At | the first queth|e of the quest|: quak|ed the wyl|de  
 Der drof | in the dal|e : dot|ed for dred|e  
 Hi3|ed to | the hy3|e : bot het|erly | thay wer|e  
 Restay|ed with | the stab|lye : that stout|ly ascry|ed  
 Thay let | the hert|tes haf | the gat|e : with | the hy3|e hed es  
 The brem|e buk|kes al|so : with | hor brod|e paum|e3  
 For | the fre | lorde had|e de-fende|: in fer|mysoun tym e  
 That | ther schul|de no | mon men|e : to | the mal|e der'e  
 The hin|de3 were hal|den in|: with hay | and war|  
 The do|es dry|uen with | gret dyn|: to | the dep|e slad|e3  
 Ther | my3t mon se | as thay slyp|te : slen|tyng of ar|wes  
 At uch|e wen|de under wan|de : wap|ped a fione|  
 That big|ly bote | on the broun|: with | ful brod|e hed|es  
 What | thay bray|en and bled|en : bi bonk|kes thay dey|en  
 And | ay rach|ches in | a res|: rad|ly hem fol|3es  
 Hun|teres | wyth hy3|e horn|e : has|ted hem aft|er  
 Wyth such | a crak|kande kry|: as klyf|fes had|en brust|en  
 What wyl|de so | at-wap|ed : wy3|es that schot|ten

<sup>1</sup> *Bent* is the coarse wiry grass which grows upon the upland. It was also sometimes used for the uplands themselves.

<sup>2</sup> *Barenote* appears to be the name given to some note on the bugle. The last syllable is clearly the old English word *moot*. [Rather, *F. mente*.]

<sup>3</sup> There is a mystery with respect to the final *e*, sometimes found at the end of the past participle. In this case, however, I do not think it was pronounced [Certainly not. It is the scribe's error.—W. W. S.]

<sup>4</sup> The *vetters* seem to be the same as the *scutellers* of our dramatists—that is, the men who led the lime-hounds in couples.

<sup>5</sup> The *quest* was the opening cry of the hounds.



Wat3 all | to-rac|ed and rent| : at | the res|ayt  
 Bi | thay were ten|ed at | the hy3|e : and tays|ed to | the wat|re3  
 The led|e3 were | so lern|ed : at | the lo3|e trys|teres  
 And | the gre|houndes | so gret|e : that get|en hem | byly|ue  
 And hem | to fylch|ed as fast| : as frek|es my3t lok|e.

Ther ry3t|  
 The lorde | for blys | abloy|  
 Ful oft | con laun|ce and ly3t|  
 And drof | that day | with joy|  
 Thus | to the derk|<sup>2</sup> ny3t

That this poem is the "Awntyre of Gawayn," which Wynton attributes to Huchown, or Hugh, is probable, for several reasons; and there is *one* which seems almost decisive—at the head of the MS. is written, in a hand which belongs to a period not much later than the year 1500,<sup>1</sup> what appears to be the unfinished name of its author—*Hugo de*. Hugh's other work, the "Pistill of Swete Susane," is probably the poem entitled *Sussan*, in the Cotton MS.

Hyr kynrade hyr cousyns : and alle that her knewe  
 Wrongon hondys ywys : and wepten ful sare  
 Certys for Sussan sothfast : and semyly of hewe  
 All wyues and wydowes : awondred they were  
 They dyde hyr in a downgon : wher never day dewe  
 Tyll domes mon hadde dempte : the dede to declare  
 Marred wit manacles : that mede were newe  
 Meteles fro the morn : till midday and mare

In drede  
 Tho come her fadyr so fre  
 With all hys affynyte  
 The prestes were with out pyte  
 And full of falshede

In the same kind of stave are written the two poems which Pinkerton published under the titles of "Sir Gawane

<sup>1</sup> The *resayt* appears to mean the stations in the valley, near the river. The game was driven from the woody hills towards the *stabye*, and when they had slipt by, on their road to the valley, they were chased by the men at the low stations." The whole puts one in mind of the hunting scenes in Germany: though probably a more zealous sportsman might see important difference between them.

Was all pulled down and torn at the *resayt*,<sup>1</sup>  
 After they were baited at the hedge and driven to the waters—  
 The people were so skilful at the low stations !  
 And the greyhounds so great, that got them quickly,  
 And filch'd them (as fast as people could look at them).

There, right well !  
 The Lord for bliss [cried *abloy* !]  
 Full oft gan he leap and and be merry ;  
 And the day drove on [he passed the day] with joy,  
 Thus to the dark night.

Cal. A. II. ;<sup>4</sup> and there are reasons for believing that even  
 "the gret gest of Arthure" would be forthcoming, if dili-  
 gently looked for.

The poem of *Sussan* is written in staves, which are  
 formed by joining to the stave of 8 lines with alternating  
 rime, a certain kind of wheel or burthen, of which we  
 shall have much to say hereafter. The following is a  
 specimen :

Her kindred, her cousins, and all that knew her,  
 Wrung their hands ywiss, and wept full sorely—  
 Certes for righteous Susan, so seemly of hew !  
 All wives and widows, astounded were they !  
 They put her in a dungeon, where never day dawn'd,  
 (Till the doomster gave judgment, to pronounce on the deed,)  
 Oppress'd with manacles, that were made new.  
 Meatless from the morn till midday and more—

All in dread !  
 Then came her father so good,  
 And all his kinsmen.  
 The priests were without pity,  
 And full of falshood !

and Sir Galaron," and "Gawane and Gologras;" also Hol-  
 land's satirical fable called *The Howlat*; and Gawin Douglas's

<sup>1</sup> Qy. *derke*.

<sup>2</sup> The MS. was written about the year 1400.

<sup>4</sup> A more perfect copy may be found in the Vernon MS. of the Bodleian Library, and a third copy in one of Whitaker's MSS. See Whitaker's Pref. to Piers Ploughman.

well-known Prologue to the 8th *Æneid*. But there is one peculiarity in these poems which should not pass unnoticed. The short line, or in technical language the *bob*, which introduces the wheel, is lengthened out into a full alliterative verse; and is always closely connected with the wheel, instead of being separated from it by a stop. The same peculiarity is found in every Scotch poem of the fifteenth century, that admits a wheel of this kind—a strong argument to show, that the poems, from which we have quoted, are of earlier date. This notion is also, in some measure, countenanced by Dunbar. In his “Lament for the death of the Makars,” he mentions,

The gude Schir Hew of Eglentoun,

who was probably Wynton’s *Huchown*; and afterwards laments for another writer, who may have written the tales which Pinkerton published,

*Clerk of Tranent* eik he (Death) hes tane  
That made the auntris of Gawane.

Douglas’s Prologue, whether we look to its subject, or to its present waning popularity, may well take for its text “all is vanity.” Its merit is not easy to estimate under the disadvantages of an obsolete dialect, bygone idioms, and a reference to a state of life and manners so unlike our own. Many strokes of satire, which at the time may have had a direct and personal application, are now sunk into vapid generalities, or lost from our ignorance of local circumstances. Still enough remains to excuse, if not to justify, the praises that were once lavished on this favourite poem. The crowd of images, and the grotesque combinations, produce almost the same effect on the mind as the noise, and hubbub, and confusion of another vanity-fair upon the ear of Bunyan’s pilgrim. The broken and sketchy style, and the curious idiomatic turns, must, even at the time, have given the work a character of quaintness and oddity; and may have recommended it to many, who otherwise were little likely to pay attention to the lessons it read them. Want of space alone prevents me from extracting it.

There are also alliterative poems, written in the common ballet-stave of eight verses. One of these, entitled "Little John Nobody,"<sup>1</sup> was composed as late as the year 1550.

I have, in the course of this chapter, called Hugh the oldest English poet, born north of Tweed, whose works have reached us. Tyrwhitt, on the faith of a passage in Robert of Brunne, which he thought attributed the Gist of Tristrem to Erceldon and Kendale, gave these writers, or rather the first of them, the credit of its authorship; and Sir Walter Scott supported the claim in an elaborate criticism. Were this criticism sound, Erceldon would precede Hugh by at least a century. I think, however, that the general opinion, both at home and abroad, is against it. To me it always seemed, that the first stave of the poem [of Sir Tristrem] went far to exclude Erceldon from all share in its composition.

I was at Erceldoune  
 With Tomas spak Y thare,  
 Ther herd Y rede in roun  
 Who Tristrem gat and bare .  
 Who was king with croun ;  
 And who him fosterd yare ;  
 And who was bold baroun  
 As thair elders ware  
       Bi yere—  
 Tomas tells in town  
 This auentours as thai ware .

Now the story of Tristrem (as we shall presently see) was variously told; and it was a common practice to solicit the confidence of the hearer by quoting some well-known name as authority. The earlier "diseur" sheltered himself under the name of Breri; the Germans preferred the story of Thomas the Cornish Chronicler; and *Kendale*, it appears, followed Thomas of Erceldon. Whether Erceldon told the tale in English or Romance, in prose or verse, we have no means of ascertaining. From him the Westmoreland poet learned the story, and this seems to be the extent of his

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<sup>1</sup> See Percy's Reliques.

obligations. Had the poem been a mere copy, we should doubtless have heard something of the original—of the “*boc*” or the “*parchemin*.”

The dispute as to the authorship of *Tristrem* involved another (and one of much greater interest), as to the origin of British romance. This cycle of fictitious narrative has exerted so powerful an influence on the early literature of Europe, that I shall probably be forgiven if I lay before the reader some speculations on the subject.

The early romances, which relate to our race or country, may be divided into two classes—English stories,<sup>1</sup> such as the *Fall of Fins-burgh*, *Beowulf*, *Byrthnoth*, *Horn*, *Havelok*, &c.; and British, or such as *treat of Arthur*, and other knights of Wales, Cornwall, or Britany. The first class may be traced up to the fifth century, and perhaps to a period even more remote; but we have no specimen of the second, in our mother-tongue, till the latter half of the thirteenth century. These two cycles of romantic fiction exhibit a striking contrast, not only as to style, but also in their incidents, the state of manners which they unfold, and their general moral tendencies. Our present inquiry relates only to the British cycle.

The earliest names recorded, in connexion with the authorship of these tales, are those of three Englishmen,<sup>2</sup> Luke Gast, who is said to have lived near Salisbury;<sup>3</sup> Walter Mapes, the jovial, witty, and satirical Archdeacon of Oxford; and Robert Borron. The first of these is said to have translated the *Tristrem* from Latin into Romance;<sup>4</sup> the second

<sup>1</sup> In this class I would range all the romances which the Engle appear to have brought with them from the Continent, though the merit of their *invention* may possibly belong to other Gothic races—such as the tales of *Ætla*, of *Theodric*, and perhaps of *Weland*. English romances on these subjects were certainly extant in the eleventh century, but it is now impossible to say how far they agreed with the tales on the same subjects, which are still extant in the Icelandic and the German.

<sup>2</sup> Two or three other persons are said to have *assisted* in the writing of these tales, all of whom appear to have been attached to the English court.

<sup>3</sup> In the neighbourhood of this city was the royal palace of Clarendon, which may account for the importance given to it in some of these romances.

<sup>4</sup> *Bibl. du Roi*, Cod. 6776, and Cod. 6956. See Montfaucon.

to have written, in Latin, the Birth and Life of Arthur, the Launcelot, the Saint Graal, and the Death of Arthur, the last at the express suggestion of our Henry the Second ;<sup>1</sup> and, by command of the same monarch, Robert Borron is said to have translated into Romance, from Walter Mapes's Latin, the Launcelot and the Saint Graal.<sup>2</sup> There is still extant a copy of the Tristrem,<sup>3</sup> which cannot be later than the early half of the thirteenth century, and *may* be the version of Luke Gast ; also a MS. of the Launcelot,<sup>4</sup> of the twelfth century, which, as far as it goes, agrees with the French printed copy,<sup>5</sup> and is probably Robert Borron's translation above referred to ; but the Latin versions of Walter Mapes seem utterly to have perished.

With one doubtful exception,<sup>6</sup> all these tales appear to have been written in prose. But before the year 1200 the Tristrem was certainly versified by the French poet, Christian of Troyes ; and also, it has been conjectured, by a poet named *Thomas*, round whose name has gathered a cloud of mystery, which has misled not a few who have endeavoured to pierce it.

The French government has lately published the early romances which relate to Tristrem ; and, among others, a Norman MS.<sup>7</sup> of the thirteenth century, and the well-known Douce MS. which probably belongs to the same period.

<sup>1</sup> Histoire du Roy Artus, &c. Rouen, A. D. 1488.

<sup>2</sup> Bibl. du Roi, Cod. 6783, at the end. The Vatican MS. 1687, says he translated the Saint Graal from Latin into romance *by order of holy Church*. The Saint Graal, it may be observed, was the miraculous cup which received our Lord's blood, and the adventures undergone in search of it are the subject of the romance.

There are some reasons for believing that Luke Gast began this translation, and that Robert Borron merely finished it.

<sup>3</sup> Harl. 20. D. 2.

<sup>4</sup> Harl. 20. D. 3.

<sup>5</sup> The Histoire du Roy Artus, &c. (see n. 1), contains the life of Launcelot, &c.

<sup>6</sup> One edition of the Saint Graal (Paris, A. D. 1516), states that Robert Borron translated the Saint Graal first into *rime*, and then into prose.

<sup>7</sup> Some of the French critics conjecture, that this is the version of Christian of Troyes ; but, as the dialect is clearly Norman, they would meet with great difficulties in maintaining this criticism.



The former refers to *Beroz*, as the best authority for the story, and the latter to *Breri*,

Who knew the gests and tales  
Of all the kings—of all the counts,  
Who had been “en Bretagne.”

The Douce MS. also tells us, that *Thomas* would not admit certain parts of the story, but undertook to prove them false. Now Godfrey of Strasburg, who translated the *Tristrem* into German soon after the year 1200, mentions *Thomas of Britannia*, as being well-read in British books, and the best authority upon the subject. As Godfrey professes to follow him, and as it is clear, from his use of French words and phrases, that the German had a French original before him, it has been supposed that *Thomas* wrote the life of *Tristrem* in French. Were this so, our first conjecture would naturally be, that *Thomas of Erceldon* was the man; but, as it is impossible to reconcile the dates, the opinion of Sir F. Madden may be entitled to some weight, which attributes a Norman version of the tale to *Thomas of Kent*—the same who assisted in composing the *Roman d’Alexandre*, and who may probably claim an interest in the Norman versions of *Horn* and *Havelok*, both of which refer to a *Thomas* as their author.<sup>1</sup>

But, as if to double the confusion, another German poet, *Wolfram von Eschenbach*, mentions *Thomas of Britany’s Chronicle of Cornwall*, as the authority he followed in one of his romances. Hence it would appear, that *Thomas* was a chronicler; and unless we conclude that a Welsh *Thomas* chronicled the story, which an English *Thomas* versified, and a Scotch *Thomas* most strangely appropriated, it would be difficult to admit the hypothesis above stated.

On the whole, it may perhaps be safest to conclude, that Godfrey had before him the Romance poem of some nameless author, which professed to give the story of *Thomas the Chronicler*, rather than the highly wrought tale which

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<sup>1</sup> From the introduction of English phrases, and allusion to English customs, it is clear that the Norman version of *Horn*, Harl. 527, was the work of an Englishman.

Luke Gast had put together ; but I cannot tell in what way Thomas of Erceldon was connected with the story, except as being one of the famous “seggers” of the thirteenth century.

A like preference of the Chronicler to the mere storyteller is met with in other romances. In the fifteenth century Henry Skynner gave an English version of the story, which “Maister Robert of Borrown” translated into French ; but he tells<sup>1</sup> those, that

will knowen in sertaygne  
What kynges that weren in grete Bretaygne  
Sithan that Christendom thedyr was browht  
They scholen hem fynde has so that it sawht  
In the storye of Brwttes book  
There scholen ye it fynde and ye weten look  
Which that *Martyn de Beure* translated here  
From Latyn into Romaunce in his manere.

I incline to think the “Brwttes book” here attributed to Martin of Bury, is still extant. The Harl. MS. 1605 contains the fragments of a British History, written in the same language and metre as Langtoft’s Chronicle, that is, in Norman Alexandrines, with the rime running through fifteen or twenty verses.<sup>2</sup> The poem was probably written before the year 1200, for the manuscript cannot be of much later date ; by an ecclesiastic, from the frequent allusions to Scripture history ; and by an Englishman, from the intimate knowledge displayed of the English language. It shows all the learning of the cloister, and the skill of the practised versifier, and, moreover, an imagination to the full as active as the “manere” is curious. It may have given rise to much of the romantic fiction of the thirteenth century ; and

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<sup>1</sup> Nasmyth, as quoted by Warton, furnishes the extract. Either the MS. or his transcript of it, must have been very carelessly written. [The MS. is very carelessly written. A large portion of it is printed in Mr. Furnivall’s edition of *The Holy Grail* ; but the extract here cited occurs in a later portion, in the story of *Merlin*.—W. W. S.]

<sup>2</sup> De la Rue has advanced some strong arguments to show that Geoffrey Gaimar must, like Wace, have versified the Brut ; and that his history of the Anglo-Saxon Kings is merely the sequel. But the poem referred to in the text has neither his *metre*, nor, if I may be allowed to judge, his *style*.

is, I think, full as likely to be the "British History" referred to by French and German romancers, as the Latin of Geoffrey, or the cold and prosaic narrative of Wace. Perhaps it would not be so difficult, as might appear at first sight, to connect this Martin of Bury with the *Breri* and the *Beroz*, whom we have seen quoted as authorities, on the subject of Tristrem. *Breri* may be a Norman blunder (perhaps the usual and recognized corruption,<sup>1</sup>) for *Beri*, a mode of spelling which is sometimes met with in the thirteenth century; and in the old English dialect of that and the preceding century, the writer would also be termed Martin Burigs,<sup>2</sup> (or according to diversity of spelling, *Beroz*) that is Martin of Bury. I would say then, (if we may be allowed to speculate on such slender premises,) that Martin of Bury may have left some account<sup>3</sup> of Tristrem, which agreed with that afterwards given by Thomas the Chronicler, and generally followed by later and more scrupulous romancers.

Where the property in those tales lay *originally* is a question not very easily answered. Many *Welsh* copies of the Brut are met with in our libraries; and in one of them, written in the year 1470, by a Welsh poet named Guttyn Owen, the Brut is ascribed to Tyssilio, a bishop, and son of Brocmael Yscythroc, King of Powis. It has been conjectured, indeed, that these Welsh copies may be translations from Geoffrey's Latin; but, as several of the names bear a close analogy to those which figure in history, while the corresponding names in the Latin can only be reconciled to history, by supposing them to be the latinized forms of the Welsh names—the Welsh version is probably the original *Brut y Brenhined*, which Geoffrey translated. There

<sup>1</sup> Like *Duresme* for Dunholm, and *Nichole* for Lincoln. *Durham* is one of the few instances in which the Norman corruption has permanently got the better of the English name. Bristol, I believe, is another instance.

<sup>2</sup> The same idiom is still met with in the names of places, as *Leamington Priors*, *Leamington of the Prior*, *St. Saviour Overies*, *St. Saviour of the Over* or strand.

<sup>3</sup> Possibly interpolated into some part of his "*Brwttes bok*," which is now missing.

is also a Welsh San Graal; but, as the Welsh certainly translated some English romances, this may possibly have been of the number.

Perhaps we may come nearest to the truth, by supposing that our early English romancers invented *some* of these tales from the scanty notices which they found in the Brut and other works of the same kind; and translated *others* either from the Welsh, or from Latin stories written by Welshmen. The Morte Arthur may have been the invention of Walter Mapes, but the story of the San Graal is certainly of earlier date; and we have some faint notices of a "British Hermit," who lived at the beginning of the eighth century, and is said to have written a book entitled *Sanctum Graal, de Rege Arthure et rebus gestis ejus, de mensâ rotundâ, &c.*<sup>1</sup> This work was probably in Welsh. The Latin Tristrem, from which Luke Gast translated, may have been a version from the same language.

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<sup>1</sup> Pitts, p. 222; Bale, x. 21; Usser, Primord. p. 17.

## CHAPTER VI.

## THE PSALM-METRES.

By this name we have hitherto designated a class of metres, which seem to have been borrowed from the Church-hymns, and used, in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, chiefly for purposes connected with the Church-service. The name of Church-metres, however, would have been too comprehensive; and the present title was thought not inappropriate, inasmuch as the staves, which are commonly used in our versions of the Psalms, may be directly traced to these metres, as their origin.

The Church-hymns may be divided into two classes, accordingly as the rhythm is measured by quantity or accent. The versification of the first class seems to have been known by the name of "metrum," and that of the latter by the name of "rhythmus." Bede, in his work *De Metris*, after noticing such of the classical metres as were popular in his time, has a chapter upon "Rhythmus." It presents us with difficulties, arising as well from the nature of the subject, as from the discrepancies which are found to exist between the different copies. I think however we may gather, that in "rhythmus" quantity was disregarded, and the number of syllables *fixed*—so that, although in "metrum" a foot of three syllables might, in some cases, be used for one of two, this license was not allowed in the corresponding "rhythmus." He quotes as an instance of accentual verse, made in imitation of the Iambic metre, "that celebrated hymn,

" Rex æterne Domine,<sup>1</sup>  
Rerum Creator omnium,

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<sup>1</sup> This verse is deficient by a syllable. Must we split the diphthong, and read *acterne*? [No; rather take *rex* as constituting a foot by itself.—W. W. S.]

Qui eras ante sæcula  
Semper cum Patre Filius, &c.

and many others of Ambrosius."<sup>1</sup> "They sing," he also tells us, "in the same way as the trochaic metre, the hymn on the day of judgment, running through the alphabet."<sup>2</sup>

Apparebit repentina dies magna Domini,  
Fur obscurâ velut nocte improvisos occupans," &c.

Some critics are of opinion, that the laws, which governed these accentual verses, corresponded with those that regulated the *accentus*, or sharp tones of the classical metres; while others consider their accents as substitutes for the *metrical ictus*. I shall not venture to discuss a question, which Bentley and Dawes and Foster have failed in answering satisfactorily—more especially as there still exist MSS. which treat expressly of the structure and peculiarities of this class of verses.<sup>3</sup> It may, however, be observed, that, as the later Latin poets seem to have preferred, and in some feet required, the coincidence of the sharp tone with the *ictus*, the question whether the accent of the "rhythmus" represented the *ictus* or the *accentus* of the "metrum," is not of that *very great* importance it would appear at first sight. I incline also to think, that some of these "rhythmi" had their accents determined by causes, which were wholly independent both of the one and of the other.

The Iambic "rhythmus," noticed by Bede, was a favourite one during the middle ages; and is probably the origin of the common metre of eight syllables, now so common

<sup>1</sup> The celebrated Bishop of Milan.

<sup>2</sup> The first verse, it will be seen, begins with *A*. Compare—

Tres | cento|rum cubito|rum : arch|æ long|itu|do,  
Sed | et quin|quies | deno|rum : e|jus la|titu|do,  
Sex | ies | quoque | quino|rum : e|jus al|titu|do.

Mapes, p. 210.

<sup>3</sup> When we remember how little is known, and what different opinions have been holden, on the subject of *arsis* and *thesis*, and how much light must necessarily be thrown upon it by an examination of these MSS., it is by no means creditable to modern scholarship, that they have been so long neglected.

throughout Europe.<sup>1</sup> His trochaic "rhythmus" was modelled on the Catalectic Tetrameter; and, in his verses on *the year*, was used with final rime.

An|nus so|lis con|tine|tur : quat|uor | tempor|ibus|  
 Ac | dein|de ad|imple|tur : du|ode|cim men|sibus|  
 Quin|quagin|ta et | dua|bus : cur|rit heb|domad|ibus|  
 Tre|cente|nis sex|agin|ta : at|que quin|que di|ebus| &c.<sup>2</sup>

From the sixth to the fourteenth century, this "rhythmus" was common throughout Europe. The *complete tetrameter* (though little, if at all, known to the monks) was doubtless the classical metre, on which St. Austin modelled his verses against the Donatists.

A|bundan|tia<sup>3</sup> pec|cator|um : so|let fra|tres con|turba're  
 Prop|ter hoc | Domin|us nos|ter : vo|luit | nos præ mone're  
 Com|parans | regnum | celo|rum : ret|icu|lo mis|so in mar'e  
 Con|gregan|ti mul|tos pis|ces : om|ne ge|nus hinc | et in de'  
 Quos | cum trax|issent | ad lit|tus : tunc | cœpe|runt sep'ara're  
 Bon|os in | vasa | mise|runt; re|liquos | malos | in ma're, &c.

In one of the letters<sup>5</sup> of the Irish Saint Columban, we find a *rhythmus*, which, from its pause and cadence, seems to have been formed upon the trochaic *septenarius*. It was written about the year 600.

Mun|dus is|te tran|sit et| : quoti|die | decres|cit  
 Ne|mo vi|vens man|ebit| : nullus | vivus | reman|sit  
 To|tum hu|manum | genus| : ortu | uti|tur pa'ri,  
 Et | de sim|ili | vitâ : fine | cadit | æqua|li,<sup>6</sup> &c.

Another *rhythmus*, closely resembling the last, was very popular in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, particularly

<sup>1</sup> See Müller's *Deutsche Dichter*, 1; Gryphius, pp. 196, 200, 206. Whether our English metre of four accents *originated* in this "rhythmus," or was merely influenced by it, has been discussed in Chapter IV.

<sup>2</sup> Gallias Cæsar subegit; Nicomedes Cæsarem;  
 Ecce Cæsar nunc triumphat, qui subegit Gallias,  
 Nicomedes non triumphat, qui subegit Cæsarem.

Suetonius; Julius, c. 49. See also capp. 51, 60.

<sup>3</sup> Among the licenses taken by the writers of "rhythmus," *crasis* appears to have been one of the most frequent.

<sup>4</sup> Here is no rime.

<sup>5</sup> See Usher's *Vet. Epist. Hib. Sylloge*, p. 9.

<sup>6</sup> Here we have a specimen of the Irish or vowel rime.

among our countrymen. The first stave of Walter Mapes' celebrated drinking song may serve as an example. I cannot satisfactorily connect it with its "metrum."

Mi|hi est | propos|itum| : in | taber|na mo|ri  
 Vi|num sit | appos|itum| : mo|rien, tis o|ri  
 Ut | dicant | cum ven|erint| : an|gelo|rum cho|ri  
 De|us sit | propi|tius| : hu|ic po|tato|ri.<sup>1</sup>

But no "rhythmus" has left more traces in our English versification, than that which was borrowed from the Greek church in the twelfth century, and modelled on the Catalectic Iambic Tetrameter. One of the earliest specimens is the work of Psellus on the Civil Law, addressed to Michael Ducas, the "Royal Kaiser," or heir apparent. As he ascended the throne in 1071, it must have been written before that year. It opens thus,

Πολὸν καὶ δυσθεώρητον τὸ μάθημα τοῦ νόμου,  
 Ἐν πλατεῖ δυσπερίληπτον, ἀσαφες ἐν σύνοψει,  
 Καὶ λόγῳ δυσερμηνευτον, ἀλλ' ὅμως ἀνάγκαιον,  
 Καὶ δεῖ τὸν αὐτοκράτορα τοῦτον μᾶλλον φροντίζειν,  
 Δικαίως γάρ τε δίκαιον ἐν δίκαις φυλάκτεον  
 Ὅθεν ἐγὼ σοὶ τὰ πολλὰ τοῦ λόγου συνοψίσας,  
 Ευθίγατον τι σύνταγμα πεποίηκα τῶν νόμων.

Wide spread and hard to theorize : the Law's important science !  
 Both hard in full to comprehend : and darken'd by abridgement,  
 And hard in words to construe right : but ne'ertheless 'tis *needful*—  
 And most an Emp'ror it behoves : to weigh well all its bearings,  
 For justly in his judgements he : should ever deal out justice ;  
 So now in compass small I've brought : full many things together,  
 And of our laws a simple sketch : have made for thee to study.

Strange to say, Foster, whose learning and good sense no man will question, considered the *στίχοι πολιτικοί* not as "iambics regulated by accent, but loose trochaics, as independent of it as any in Euripides ;" and a writer in one of our *Reviews*,<sup>2</sup> who acknowledges them as accentual, nevertheless connects them with the Trochaic metre. Were they

<sup>1</sup> See a staff with interwoven rime, Mapes, p. 208 ; a staff of three, closed with a hexameter, Polit. Songs, ed. Wright, p. 27 ; a staff of four, closed with a hexameter or pentameter, with sectional rime, Polit. Songs, p. 182.

<sup>2</sup> Edin. Rev. xii. 10.



so connected, we should have the Trochaic "rhythmus" of the Latins accented on the *odd*, and that of the Greeks on the *even* syllables—a discrepancy that might well startle us. The Reviewer asserts, that the Iambic Tetrameter has not the same division, and but rarely the same cadence. I believe neither of these assertions will bear examination. The cadence of the Catalectic Tetrameter, or in other words the position of its sharp-toned syllables, is very commonly found to be the same, as in these accentual verses; and, both in the metrum and rhythmus, the pause immediately follows the close of the second metre. The *full* tetrameter, indeed, divided after the first syllable of the third metre, and this very probably led to the Reviewer's mistake.

In the same rhythm as these Greek verses, was written, during the latter half of the twelfth century, a very long and curious English poem. The writer tells us, he was christened by the name of *Ormin*; and, in another place, he gives the title of *Ormulum* to his work, "because that *Orm* it made." Of his mode of spelling we have already spoken;<sup>1</sup> it appeared to some of our critics so barbarous,<sup>2</sup> that they at once denounced him as a Dane, and fixed him as a native in one of our eastern counties. A later writer, who entertains juster notions of his orthography, tells us<sup>3</sup> nevertheless, that "*Orm's* dialect merits, if any, to be called *Dano-Saxon*; his name also betrays a Scandinavian descent."

Why his name should be "Scandinavian," I cannot tell, unless it be that the Danish word *orm* answers to our English *worm*! But is not *Orm* the abbreviation of *Ormin*, like Will for William, or Rob for Robert? and is not *Ormin* the German Herman, and the Latin Arminius?<sup>4</sup> We need

<sup>1</sup> See p. 104.

<sup>2</sup> What would *Ormin* have said to the orthography, in which these gentlemen conveyed their censures?

<sup>3</sup> *Analecta Anglo-Saxonica*, p. x. [edited by Thorpe].

<sup>4</sup> It may perhaps be questioned, if Herman be not the Anglo-Saxon Herman, and a different name from Arminius; but there can be little doubt that Arminius was the same as *Ormin*. [Yet I doubt it very much.—W. W. S.]

not, however, rest content with speculation. Reginald of Durham, who lived in the reigns of Stephen and of Henry, having occasion to mention this name of *Orm*, expressly calls it an *English* name, and thus he distinguishes it from the Northern or Danish name of Wilhelm.<sup>1</sup>

To the native purity of his language the poet himself bears witness. In one place, he terms it "thiss Ennglissh;" in another, "thiss Ennglisshe writt;" and in a third, he tells us that he wrote, "Ennglisshe menn to lare," that is, for the *lore* or instruction of Englishmen. I consider it as the oldest, the purest, and by far the most valuable specimen of our Old English dialect, that time has left us. Layamon seems to have halted between two languages, the written and the spoken. Now he gives us what appears to be the Old English dialect of the West; and, a few sentences further, we find ourselves entangled in all the peculiarities of the Anglo-Saxon. But Ormin used the dialect of his day; and, when he wanted precision or uniformity, he followed out the principles on which that dialect rested. Were we thoroughly masters of his grammar and vocabulary, we might hope to explain many of the difficulties, in which blunders of transcription and a *transitional* state of language have involved the syntax and the prosody of Chaucer.

In taking even a rapid view of our literature, we cannot fail being struck with the varying forms, through which our language passes. To notice all these changes, would leave us little room for any other inquiry; but wholly to pass them by, might deprive the reader of information, which, in some cases, may be necessary, for the full elucidation of passages that will be laid before him. So far as the changes have been effected by lapse of *time*, they have already furnished matter for speculation;<sup>2</sup> I would now offer some remarks on the influence of *place*, as the subject of local

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<sup>1</sup> Reginaldi Monachi Dunelm. Libellus, &c. p. 105. This curious book was published by the Surtees Society in 1835. [I should call *Wilhelm* Frankish, and therefore quite different from *Ormin*, which I should call Northern English or Scandinavian origin. See notes at the end of the volume.—W. W. S.]

<sup>2</sup> See p. 399.

dialect is more directly brought before our notice, by the work of Ormin.

In a late article,<sup>1</sup> upon our "English dialects," was quoted the following passage from Higden, written about the year 1350. "Although the English, as being descended from three German tribes, at first had among them three different dialects, namely Southern, Midland, and Northern; yet being mixed, in the first instance with Danes, and afterwards with Normans, they have in many respects corrupted their own tongue, and now affect a sort of outlandish babble (*peregrinos captant boatus et garritus*). In the above three-fold Saxon tongue, which has barely survived among a few country people, the men of the east agree more in speech with those of the west—as being situated under the same quarter of the heavens—than the northern men with the southern. Hence it is that the Mercians or Midland English—partaking as it were the nature of the extremes—understand the adjoining dialects, the northern and the southern, better than those last understand each other. The whole speech of the Northumbrians, especially in Yorkshire, is so harsh and rude, that we southern men can hardly understand it."

With this division of our dialects the Reviewer is dissatisfied; he thinks it "*certain*, that there were in his (Higden's) time, and probably long before, *five distinctly marked forms*, which may be classed as follows: First, Southern or standard English, which in the fourteenth century was perhaps best spoken in Kent and Surrey, by the body of the inhabitants. Secondly, Western English, of which traces may be found from Hampshire to Devonshire, and northward as far as the Avon.<sup>2</sup> Thirdly, Mercian, vestiges of which appear in Shropshire, Staffordshire, south and west Derbyshire, becoming distinctly marked in Cheshire, and still more in

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<sup>1</sup> Quart. Rev. No. 110, Art. 3. [I suppose it was written by R. Garnett. The passage from Trevisa's translation of Higden is printed in *Specimens of English*, ed. Morris and Skeat, pp. 241, 242. The original Latin is in the edition of Higden printed in the Record Series, vol. ii. p. 137.—W. W. S.]

<sup>2</sup> The Avon of Bristol, or of Warwickshire?

south Lancashire. Fourthly, Anglian, of which there are three subdivisions—the East Anglian of Norfolk and Suffolk—the Middle Anglian of Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire, and east Derbyshire—and the North Anglian of the west riding of Yorkshire, spoken most purely in the central part of the mountainous district of Craven. Fifthly, Northumbrian, of which we shall speak more fully in the sequel.”

It were to be wished, the Reviewer had told us, what were the distinctive peculiarities<sup>1</sup> of his five dialects, and by what process of reasoning and investigation he arrived at the results here stated. I have myself been led to very different conclusions. So far from “southern or standard English” being the language generally spoken in Kent and Surrey, during the fourteenth century, I think it may be shown, very satisfactorily, that till the beginning of the seventeenth “western English” was to be met with at the very gates of London. By western English, I presume, is meant that dialect, which still prevails in Wiltshire and Somerset, and, with greater purity, in Devonshire; which prefers the vocal letters *v*, *z*, *dh*, to the whisper-letters *f*, *s*, *th*; which ends the third person of its verb in *th*,<sup>2</sup>—*he louth*, *he zeeth*, &c.; and takes *ich* or *ch* for its first personal pronoun, *ch’ad*, *ch’am*, *ch’ull*, &c.

There are marks of this dialect, in the poems of John of

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<sup>1</sup> He only *once* alludes to these peculiarities—he makes *k* characteristic of the “Anglian,” and *ch* of the “Mercian” dialect. I incline to think, that *ch* has been substituted for *k*, somewhat more generally in the western, than in the eastern countries; but to make it a test of dialect, is very hazardous criticism. Have we not *kari* a churl, *kinkhoast* a chincough, *striking* shrieking, *stik* a fitch, &c. in the “Mercian” dialect of South Lancashire? and *planch* a plank, *milcher* a milker, &c. in the “Anglian” dialect of Suffolk? Rob. of Brunne, though an “Anglian,” seems to have preferred the *ch*, witness his *bishopriche* a bishopric, *oliche* alike, *beteck* to betake, *cheitiff* a caitiff, *Chain* Cain, &c. [It is sufficient to consider only *three* dialects, Northern, Midland, and Southern; see p. 485. The South-Western dialect agrees sufficiently with the Southern. The true test of dialect is grammar; see p. 482. See Introduction to Specimens of English, ed. Morris and Skeat, p. xviii.—W. W. S.]

<sup>2</sup> This verbal inflexion is no longer heard, east of the Parret (see Jennings’s Obs. on the Western Dialects); but, at an earlier period, it was used throughout the south of England, even in the formation of the plural verb.

*Guildford*,<sup>1</sup> almost as decided as in those of Robert of *Gloucester*; and in the "Ayenbyte of Inwyt,"<sup>2</sup> which was written "mid Englis of *Kent*," A. D. 1340, we see its peculiarities even more clearly developed. But we need not dwell upon these early instances, for we find it overspreading the south of England, as late as the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It is put into the mouth of the Essex peasantry<sup>3</sup> by the author of *Gammer Gurton's Needle*; of the Middlesex yeomanry by Jonson;<sup>4</sup> of the men of Kent by Sir Thomas More<sup>5</sup> and Shakespeare.<sup>6</sup> It seems, indeed, to have reached from Devon over all England south of Thames; over south Gloucestershire; and north of the river, over Essex and Middlesex. It may, I think, be fairly considered as the Old English dialect of the *Seaxe*; and seems to have overrun (if ever they were different) the dialects of the *Cant-ware* and the *Wilt-ware*—that is of the Iutish settlers in Kent and Hampshire.

<sup>1</sup> See p. 427.

<sup>2</sup> Arundel MS. 57.

<sup>3</sup> That the scene of this play was laid north of Thames, we learn from poor Hodge, Act 3, Sc. 4.

——— ich know, that's not, *within this land*,

A murrainer cat than Gib is, *betwixt the Thames and Tyne*,

Sh'ase as much wit in her head, almost as ch'ave in mine.

John Still, the author (the future Master of St. John's and Trinity) was rector of Hadleigh, which is about four miles from Essex; and Cambridge, where the play was acted, is some twelve. The *Gammer's St. Still* is clearly the virgin saint of Essex—the queenly Osith: and in the language we may trace a mixture of the northern dialect, (the third person of the verb sometimes ending in *s*, instead of *th*, and the second in *s* instead of *st*) just as we might expect on the borders of the two counties, Essex and Suffolk. There can be little doubt that Still used the dialect, which he heard spoken around him—in other words the dialect of North Essex.

<sup>4</sup> See his *Tale of a Tub*. The speakers, it should be observed, come from the very suburbs of London—from Kilburn, Islington, and St. Pancras.

<sup>5</sup> In his well-known story of the Tenterden Steeple.

<sup>6</sup> *Lear*, 4. 6. Shakespeare gives to *I'ae* the force of a future—*ie try*, I'll try; and in *Gammer Gurton's Needle*, we have *ie teach*, I'll teach, *we'ae ha*, we'll have, &c. In the Northern dialect this form generally indicates future time, but, I believe, always *present* time in the dialect of Devonshire. It is however sometimes used in Lancashire, as in Devon; see *ie think*, I think, in *Tim Bobbin*, sc. 7. [The country dialect, as exhibited in dramas, is very conventional and not much to be depended on.—W. W. S.]

There are many circumstances, which might lead us to expect a difference, between the dialects spoken north and south of Thames. The Gothic races are described, in the third and fourth centuries, as forming one people, and speaking one language; but a comparison between the Mæso-Gothic and the Anglo-Saxon will convince us, that even thus early there were *dialects*; which probably melted, the one into the other, and showed more marked peculiarities of structure, as the races, which spoke them, were more widely separated. These dialects have long since ranged themselves into four great classes—the Northern, the English, the Low-Dutch, and the High-Dutch. The English connects the Northern dialects with those spoken by the Low-Dutch or Netherlanders; and the latter link in with the various dialects of the High-Dutch or German. Now the *Seze*<sup>1</sup> came from the south-western corner of the ancient “Ongle,” and were parted only by the Elbe from the Netherlandish races; while the Engle, who landed at Bamborough, came from the north-eastern coast, and were neighbours to the Dane. We might therefore expect, that the dialects of the Engle would partake more of the northern character, and those of the *Seze* of the Netherlandish; and moreover, that the distinction would be the more marked, inasmuch as a whole century elapsed, before the kindred races again met each other, on the banks of Thames.

That the dialects spoken north of this river, *did* possess a common character, which long distinguished them from the southern dialects, may, I think, be shown even at this late

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<sup>1</sup> There is reason to believe, that this word *Seze* meant nothing more than *Seamen*, and that it was first given to such of the *Engle*, as made piracy their trade. But after these *Seze* settled in Britain, though, as it would seem, they sometimes called their speech *English*, their new country *Engleland*, and themselves the *Engle-kin*, yet they were, for the most part, distinguished from the Engle of the North—the phrase *Engle and Seze* being made use of, when the writer would include the entire English population of the island.

That the *Seze* were a tribe of Engle, I think there can be little doubt. Every thing tends to show, that at the beginning of the fifth century there were only five great Gothic races in the North of Europe—the *Sweon*, the *Dene*, the *Geats*, the *Engle*, and the *Swefe*. [In what language *Seze* means *seamen*, I do not know.—W. W. S.]

period ; but the changes they have undergone are so many, that it is now very difficult to point out the peculiarities, which once bound them together as one great dialect.

One of these peculiarities I take to be the conjugation of the verb. To what extent its inflexions differed from those of the southern verb, will be seen in the following table. The vowels are accommodated to that stage of our language, which has been called the Old English.

	South Dial.	North Dial.
Indic. Pres.	Ich hop-e Thou hop-est He hop-eth We Ye } hop-eth Hi }	I hop-es Thou hop-es He hop-es We Ye } hop-es Hi }
Indic. Perf.	Thou hoped-est	Thou hoped-es
Imper. Pres.	hop-eth ye	hop-es ye
Infin. Pres.	to hop-en	to hop-e

In the Northern inflexions we may detect those of a conjugation, which is fully developed in the Swedish. They were used by Aldred, in his version of the Durham Bible, which Wanley assigns to the age of Alfred ; at a later period by the author of Havelok, Robert of Brunne, and other men of Lincolnshire and the adjoining counties ; by the men of the west, one of whom, I take it, turned William and the Werwolf into English ; and generally by Scottish writers of the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries. Churchyard, a Shrewsbury man and one of Elizabeth's courtiers, often ends his third person plural in *s* ; and the same form may be found in Shakespeare. The peasantry of the midland counties not unfrequently use this inflexion, in the first person singular and the third person plural ; and the Quakers, who are *not* an uneducated body, use it in the second person singular both of the present and perfect tenses.<sup>1</sup>

Other peculiarities of the Northern dialect seem to be, a less frequent use of the articles, the conjunctions, and the

<sup>1</sup> They excuse it, as being less *formal* than the inflexion in *est*.

personal pronouns ;<sup>1</sup> a dislike of the *n* declension ; and the use of a very curious inflexion *es*<sup>2</sup> in the plural adjective or participle, as “ the godes briddes,” the good birds, “ the knyghtis were tany<sup>s</sup>,” the knights were ta’en.

Our northern dialect also, not unfrequently, added *er* to the substantives of the south (in this particular again resembling the languages of northern Europe) as *wulfer* a wolf, *hunker* a haunch, *heather* heath, *fitcher* a fitch, *teamer* a team, *plancher* a plank, *fresher* a frog—in the dialect of Essex *frosh*.<sup>3</sup>

As to the changes of the letters—it is probable, that the vowels varied too capriciously to form any safe test, whereby to distinguish between the two dialects ; but I have little doubt, that a preference of the vocal letters was, from the first, a marked feature of the southern English. It will, I think, explain some apparent inconsistencies of Anglo-Saxon orthography, and especially as regards the use of the þ and the ð. Again, the use of the *t* for *th* appears to have been far more common in the northern than the southern counties ; and seems at last to have given rise, in the northern dialect, to two very curious laws of euphony.

In some MSS.<sup>4</sup> *t* is substituted for *th*, whenever it follows, in the same verse or member of a sentence, a word that ends in *d* or *t* ; and in other MSS.<sup>5</sup> the same change takes place,

<sup>1</sup> Why have they been so *studiously* inserted in those extracts from the Durham Bible, which appear in the *Analects* ?

<sup>2</sup> I have only seen this inflexion in MSS. which belonged to the Northern dialect.

<sup>3</sup> Compare *bunker*, a bench (Jamieson) ; *firster*, first, *asker*, an ask or water-newt (Halliwell) ; *buffer*, a calf, in Batchelor’s Dialect of Bedfordshire, p. 126.

<sup>4</sup> See the *Ormulum* ; the *Chronicle* from 1132 to 1140 ; and the *Lives* of St. Catharine, St. Margaret, and St. Juliane. King’s Lib. A. 27. The lives of the three saints seem to have been translated by one John Thayer.

<sup>5</sup> See the *Legend* of St. Catharine, and the *Institutio Monialium* [Ancren Riwle], Tit. D. 18. The *Inst. Mon.* is a very curious work, both as to subject and dialect. There is a later copy in the Southern dialect, in Nero, A. 10 ; and an ancient one in Cleop. C. vi. which I think must be written in the Midland dialect. The Latin original, I believe, is at Magd. Coll. Oxford.

This change of *th* into *t* was, in some few cases, to be met with in *Southern* MSS. ; and in the modern dialect of Somerset we may still occasionally hear the East-of-England phrase, “ now and *tan*.”



both when the preceding word ends with one of these two letters, and also when it ends with *s*. I incline to think, the first-mentioned MSS. must have been written in the eastern and midland counties, and the second set in Lincolnshire or north of Trent. Those, who know Lancashire or the rival county, will readily call to mind such phrases, as "does *to*," "houd *teh* tongue," and other illustrations of these two rules.

It is a curious fact, that both our universities are situated close to the boundary line, which separated the northern from the southern English; and I cannot help thinking, that the jealousies of these two races were consulted, in fixing upon the sites. The histories of Cambridge and Oxford are filled with their feuds; and more than once has the king's authority been interposed, to prevent the northern men retiring, and forming within their own limits a university, at Stamford or Northampton.

The union of these two races, at the university, must have favoured the growth of any intermediate dialect; and to such a dialect the circumstances of the country, during the ninth and tenth centuries, appear to have given birth. While the North was sinking beneath its own feuds, and the ravages of the Northman, the closest ties knit together the men of the midland and the southern counties; and this fellowship seems to have led, among the former, to a certain modification of the Northern dialect.

The change seems to have been brought about, not so much by adopting the peculiarities of southern speech, as by giving greater prominence to such parts of the native dialect, as were common to the south. The southern conjugations must, at all times, have been familiar (at least in dignified composition<sup>1</sup>) to the natives of the northern counties, but other conjugations were *popularly* used, and in the gradual disuse of these, and other forms peculiar to the north, the change consisted. We have MSS. of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, in which the more marked features

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<sup>1</sup> If not, we must look on our copy of *Cædmon*, as only a Southern version of the poem. [It is certainly a Southern version.—W. W. S.]

of the northern dialect are studiously avoided ; but generally the intrusion of some verbal inflexion *es*, or of some other popular idiom, shows the country of the writer as effectually, as the misplacing of a single *will* betrays the unfortunate Irishman.

These are some of the reasons, which, independently of Higden's authority,<sup>1</sup> would lead me to the conclusion, that in the middle of the fourteenth century, there were *three* great English dialects—the Northern, the Midland, and the Southern ; and, I think, that even amid the multiplied varieties of the present day, these three divisions may yet be traced. What in the fourteenth century were the *limits* of the Midland English, is a question of difficulty. The Trent seems to have been long a boundary. Surrounding with a deep and rapid stream a thinly-peopled district—the fells of Derbyshire and the wilds of Shirewood—this river opposed physical obstacles, which were but very slowly surmounted. The new dialect seems to have spread over the plains of Staffordshire, and the rich flats of Lincoln, long before it penetrated the sister-counties of Derby and Nottingham. Both these, I believe, would have been excluded by Higden ; and probably too, the adjacent counties of Stafford and Lincoln.

As the northern dialect was retreating northwards, *two* vigorous efforts were made to fix it as a literary language ; the first, in the thirteenth century, by the men of Lincolnshire<sup>2</sup>—the same, whose taste and genius yet live in their glorious churches ; and a second, in the fifteenth century, by the men of Lothian. But the convenience of a dialect, essentially the same as the northern, and far more widely understood, its literary wealth, and latterly the patronage

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<sup>1</sup> Not that I think his authority of slight moment, in a case, like the present. Whatever we may think of his *philosophy*, his testimony to a fact, directly within his own knowledge, and connected with a subject which he had evidently *studied*, is of great value.

<sup>2</sup> The number of MSS. written about the year 1300, which (judging from dialect, and other circumstances) must be referred to this county, or one of the neighbouring shires, is singularly great. Its literary activity seems to have been chiefly owing to its flourishing monasteries, Croyland, Sempringham, &c.

of the court, gave the Midland English an ascendancy, that gradually swept all rivalry before it.

The southern dialect kept its ground more firmly than the northern. Little more than two centuries have gone by, since it first began to give way before the midland dialect; and the extent to which it has yielded in different counties, is, even at this day, the best means we have of distinguishing its several varieties. The easternmost variety has now lost all the more marked features of the Southern English; and is chiefly remarkable for that confusion<sup>1</sup> of the *v* and the *w*, which is sometimes thought peculiar to the Londoners. As we go westward, we gradually fall in with the Wiltshire variety; with the *zs* and the *vs*, *thick* that, and *ich* I; with that curious form of the verb substantive, *he'm*, *we'm*, *you'm*, *they'm*,<sup>2</sup> and the infinitive in *y*, to sowy, to reapy, to nursy,<sup>3</sup> &c.; with *dr*, instead of the initial *thr*, as *droo*, *drash*, *drong*, *drawt*, *drub*,<sup>4</sup> &c.; and with that singular, but very ancient misplacing of the *r* and the *s*, in *girt*, *pirty*, *hirsch*, *hirn*, *bursh*, *hursh*,<sup>5</sup> &c. *claps*, *haps*, *aps*,<sup>6</sup> &c. The Anglo-Saxon diphthong *ea* is changed into *ya*,

<sup>1</sup> The laws, which regulate the use of the letters *u*, *v*, *w*, *y*, throughout the east of England, have been little studied, and are exceedingly puzzling. I have tried to bring these letters under rule, but without much success; and as the *y* and the *w* are not very readily distinguishable in our MSS. I fear I may sometimes have mistaken them, in such extracts as have been laid before the reader.

It may be observed, that the change of *v* into *u* or *w*, in the middle of words, as *eun* even, *euning* evening, &c. *ouer* over, *ewil* evil, &c. is common in most of our counties.

<sup>2</sup> This verb is also found in Bedfordshire. I will venture to assert, that the whole range of the Gothic dialects does not contain a word, more instructive to the philologist—one, that promises to be a more important link in the history and philosophy of language.

<sup>3</sup> This inflexion seems to be a relic of the *i* conjugation. In our older MSS. it is written *ie*.

<sup>4</sup> That is, *thro'*, *thrash*, *throng*, *throat*, *throb*, &c. According to Forby, a like change of letters is met with in Norfolk, save that, instead of the *d*, its whisper-letter is used, as might be expected. He gives as examples, *troat*, *tread*, *treater*, *trough*.

<sup>5</sup> That is, *great*, *pretty*, *rich*, *run*, *brush*, *rush*, &c. *Girt* and *pirty* are common in other parts of the kingdom, but the transposition of the *r* before other letters than *t*, is rarely met with, but in the south.

<sup>6</sup> *Clasp*, *hasp*, *asp*.

and the later diphthongs *oa* and *oi* into *wo* and *wī* (i long), as *yarth*, *yarm*, *yaker*, *yal*, *yel*, &c. *woth*, *wock*, *whot*, *dwont*, *gwon*, &c. *spwile*, *bwile*, *pwint*, *pwison*, *bway*, &c.; *ay* is replaced by *ā*, and the long *o*, by *au*, as *pā*, *wā*, *stā*, *zā*, &c. *zaw*, *paw*, *gawld*, *hawld*, *clawze*, *suppawse*, &c. When we cross the Parret, we find ourselves in the midst of the Devonshire variety, which, beside possessing almost all the peculiarities already noticed, retains yet stronger marks of the parent language—for instance *ees* for *I*, and the verbal inflexion *th*, *he zeeth*, &c.

The midland dialect (supposing it to reach the Humber) may, I think, be *conveniently* divided into *six* varieties. The easternmost is noted for a very general narrowing of its vowels, as *haeve*, *gaether*, *raedish*, *saeck*, *waex*, &c. *creedle*, *cheen*, *dreen*, *keeve*, &c. *hiven*, *thrid*, *riddy*, *brist*, *frind*, &c. *byle*, *syle*, *spyle*, *jyne*, *destrye*, &c. *fule*, *stule*, *mune*, *spune*, *bute*, *smuthe*, &c.; for the omission of the definite article after verbs implying motion to or from a place, as *walk into house*, *go up chamber*, *come out of barn*, *put them into basket*, &c.; for the use of *ta* instead of *it*, and the apparent want of inflexion in the third person singular of its verb, as *ta dew*, it does.<sup>1</sup> It is found in Norfolk, Suffolk, and Cambridgeshire; and, at no distant period, must have spread over Huntingdonshire, and up the valley of the Ouse into the heart of Bedfordshire. The Worcester variety<sup>2</sup> spreads

<sup>1</sup> See Moor's "Suffolk Words and Phrases," and Forby's "Vocabulary of East Anglia." Some notice of the Bedfordshire dialect may be found in Batchelor's "Orthoepical Analysis of the English Language."

<sup>2</sup> In Duncombe's History of Herefordshire, there is a scanty list of provincial phrases used in that county; and I am told, that a work on the Shropshire dialect, written by Mr. Hartshorne, is now in the press at Cambridge. It were to be wished these dialects were more widely studied. Gloucestershire is full of words and phrases, as yet unrecorded; and, when we learn that in some of the Oxfordshire villages, the shepherd yet *tells his tale*, (that is, counts his flock) every morning, we see, at once, the meaning of those much abused lines,

And ev'ry shepherd *tells his tale*,  
Under the hawthorn, in the dale.

and, at the same time, the importance of these inquiries.

In one of the little volumes of Old English poetry, lately published by Pickering, the ingenious editor "suspects," that the *tales* of "the Basyn," and "the

west from Oxfordshire, over the greater part of which it is spoken. Like the last, it has a marked peculiarity of *tone*, but, unlike the whining drawl of the eastern counties, its pronunciation is quick and decided. The intermediate variety,<sup>1</sup> which may perhaps be termed the Leicestershire, is remarkable for its want of tone. It has contributed, more than any of our living dialects, to the formation of our present standard English.

It may be worth while observing (though I do not lay any very great stress upon the fact) that these divisions agree, pretty accurately, with the limits assigned to three races, well known to our early history—the East-Engle, the Middle-Engle, and the Wic-ware.

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Frere and the Boy," were written in the *Shropshire* dialect. The frequent use of *ye* and *wo* (as in *yeasse*, *yether*, *yeverychene*, &c. *wother*, *wone*, *wonly*, &c.) and the use of *f* for *th* in *affurst*, are the reasons, which led him to this conclusion. But these diphthongs *ye* and *wo* are common, all over the West of England, from Cumberland to Somerset; and the use of *f* for the initial *th* is also very general. In Suffolk, Bedfordshire, and other counties, they still say *fill-horse* for thill-horse, *fistle* for thistle, *freaten* for threaten, &c.; and a like change of letters is found both in the northern and in the southern dialect.

I should have fixed on a more northern county. The use of *oy* for the long *o*, as *boyt* for both, *soyt* for soth, *roys* for rose, *goys* for goes, &c. points to the West Riding, or one of the neighbouring shires; and the western diphthongs (if we may so term them) *ye* and *wo*, direct us to the adjoining county of Lancashire. When, in addition to this, we find that, in later versions, the scene of both these tales is laid in Lancashire, I cannot hesitate in assigning the dialect to the southern part of that county.

<sup>1</sup> Few of our dialects have been more neglected than the present one, though (for several reasons) one of the most important. A slight notice of its peculiarities, as spoken in Leicestershire, may be found in Macaulay's History of Claybrook; specimens of Northamptonshire speech occur in Clare's poems; and I am told, that a book on the Warwickshire dialect may be shortly expected, from the pen of a gentleman, now living at Lichfield.

We have a minute examination of the *Bedfordshire* dialect, in Batchelor's "Orthoepical Analysis," &c. but the greater part of this county may be fairly assigned to the eastern dialect.

In the preface to the Exmoor Scolding, published A.D. 1775, we have the following given us as a specimen of the "*Buckinghamshire* farmers'" speech, "I ken a steg gobblin at our leer deer;" that is, "I see a gander feeding at our barn-door." *Steg* a gander, *ken* see, *leer* and *leath* a barn, are words now only heard in the northern counties; and, if the whole be not a blunder on the part of the editor, (which I think most probable) the northern dialect must have left such traces behind it in the agricultural districts, as will render the classification of our present midland dialects, a work of great difficulty.

The Cheshire variety reaches from the Staffordshire collieries to the banks of the Ribble.<sup>1</sup> It often uses *ya* and *wo*, for the diphthongs *ea* and *oa*; also *oi* for the long *i*, *ow* for *au*, and *eaw* for *ou*, as *oi*, *droy*, *woif*, *loive*, *foine*, *moind*, *noice*, &c. *bowt*, *fowt*, *browt*, &c. *theaw*, *heaw*, *keaw*, *eawt*, *eawl*, &c.; and it inflects the present tense of its verb thus,

Oi	hope	
Theaw	hopes	
He	hopes	
We		} hop-en
Ye		
Tha		

In the West Riding, the long *o* is changed into *oi*, and *oo* into *ooi*, as *coyl*, *hoyl*, *moite*, *oits*, *broich*, *cloise*, &c. *sooin*, *mooiin*, *fooil*, *cooil*, *mooiid*, *booick*, &c.; the final *k* also (in place of *ch*) is very prevalent—as *birk*, *perk*, *thack*, *benk*, *pick*, *ick*, &c.; and the old northern verb (singular and plural alike ending in *s*) is here more frequently met with, than elsewhere.<sup>2</sup> The Lincolnshire variety has been almost wholly neglected. Its peculiarities, I think, well

<sup>1</sup> I make this river the boundary of the Cheshire dialect, in deference to Whitaker. In the History of Whalley, we have a list of words, used south of the Ribble, compared with the synonyms used to the north of it. The comparison shows us—not (as Whitaker supposes) that the Ribble parted Mercia from Northumberland, for many of the northern terms were, a few centuries ago, common throughout the midland counties, but—that this river is the obstacle which, of late years, has stopped the midland dialect in its progress northward.

The chief works illustrative of this dialect are Collier's *Tim Bobbin*, and Wilbraham's *Vocabulary of Cheshire Words and Phrases*. In Knight's *Quarterly Mag.* for 1822, there is an account of the Staffordshire Colliers, and a short but excellent specimen of their dialect.

It should be observed, that in South Lancashire are found many of the peculiarities, which distinguish the speech of the West Riding, especially the use of *oi* for the long *o*. In Macaulay's *Hist. of Claybrook*, we find *oi* for *i*, as *moire*, *foire*.

<sup>2</sup> See Hunter's *Hallamshire dialect*, Watson's *dialect of Halifax*, and the other vocabularies published in Mr. Hunter's work. In the *Towneley Mysteries*, we have an interesting specimen of this dialect, as spoken four hundred years ago. Mr. Douce considered these plays the property of South Lancashire; but the conclusion, at which the editor arrived, by tracing the local allusions, is fully borne out by an examination of the dialect. They were certainly written at Woodkirk, near Wakefield.

justify a separate classification; some of them will be noticed hereafter.<sup>1</sup>

The Northern dialect may also, as it seems to me, be conveniently divided into six varieties. The Yorkshire spreads over the east and north ridings, over Westmoreland, and over North Lancashire. It uses the long *a* (as heard in *father*) for the long *o*, and *eea* for *oo*, as *staan*, *alaan*, *haam*, *saa*, *maar*, *saar*, &c. *feeal*, *skeeal*, *leeak*, *neeak*, *seean*, *neean*, &c.<sup>2</sup> The Durham variety, which, with the addition of the *bur*, spreads over Northumberland, uses *ae* for the long *o*, *aw* for *ow*, *a* for short *o*, and *ui* for *oo*, as *sae*, *tae*, *bane*, *stane*, *aith*, *baith*, *aik*, *maist*, *sare*, &c. *blaw*, *knav*, *awn*, *sawl*, &c. *strang*, *sang*, *warse*, *world*, &c. *luik*, *buik*, *cuil*, *fuil*, &c.<sup>3</sup> The Cumberland variety is chiefly distinguished from the latter, by the frequent use of the diphthong *wo* in the place of the long *o*, as *cwoach*, *cwoal*, *cwoat*, *dwoat*, *fwoal*, *fwoalk*, *jwoke*, *rwose*, *whope*, *whole*,<sup>4</sup> &c. In both these dialects the diphthong *ya* is common, and owing to the narrowing of the vowels is sometimes used, where other dialects have the *wo*, as *yak* an oak, *yaits* oats, *byeth* both, *hyel* whole, &c. It may be observed, that in these northern dialects not only has the *k* kept its ground very generally against the intruding *ch*, but also *d* is often used for *th*, as *fadder*, *mudder*, *anudder*, *whedur*, *togedur*, &c. The initial *qu* is moreover sometimes softened into *wh*, as *whiet*, *white*, *whart*, *whaker*, &c.

The varieties of the Northern dialect, spoken north of

<sup>1</sup> See p. 494. Ben Jonson, in his *Sad Shepherd*, has imitated the dialect spoken two centuries ago, in the vale of Belvoir. It was clearly a branch of the Lincolnshire.

<sup>2</sup> See *Specimens of the Yorkshire Dialect*, Knaresborough, 1806; and the *Westmoreland Dialect*, by A. W. (Ann Walker) Kendal, 1790. The *Craven Dialect*, of which the Rev. Mr. Carr has published a good vocabulary, seems to be *intermediate*, between the dialects of the North and West Ridings. The dialect found in Hayward's "*Witches of Lancashire*," though some of its peculiarities are those of North Lancashire, seems, on the whole, to belong to the southern part of that county. It was written in 1638.

<sup>3</sup> See Brockett's *Northern Dialect*. There are also specimens of this dialect in Brome's "*Northern Lass*."

<sup>4</sup> See *Ballads in the Cumberland Dialect*, by R. Anderson, Carlisle, 1806.

Tweed, may perhaps be ranged under the three heads—the Nithsdale, the Clydesdale, and the Lothian. Burns has made the first familiar, and the two latter may readily be called to mind, as forming (at least in great measure) the brogues of Glasgow and of Edinburgh. With respect to the dialects, which prevail beyond the Forth, I shall venture no opinion, either as to their origin or affinities—the subject is surrounded with too many difficulties.

Nothing has been said of the *Danish* elements of our language, for traces of them have been found neither in our MSS. nor in our dialects.<sup>1</sup> No where have I met with those grammatical forms, which bind the Northern languages into one great family—the *r* inflexion of the verb, the passive voice, the definite affixes of the substantive, the neuter inflexion of the adjective—and as to certain words, which philologists assure us are the “shibboleth” of the “Dano-English,” such as *gar* to make, *at* that or to, &c. *these* may be found in districts, where the Northman never settled, and are missing from counties, where he certainly did. His language, from the first, must have been little more than an English dialect, and his descendants have now been mingled with a kindred race for nearly one thousand years—is it not

<sup>1</sup> Doctor Jamieson discovered not only Danish dialects, but also traces of a Scandinavian language, which must have been introduced *before* the Northman invasions. The Doctor was resolved, at any cost, to make *Picts* of his Lowlanders; and to his theory was too often content to sacrifice his dictionary! Were it not for this hapless theory, we should now have had an excellent dictionary of our northern dialect.

The Reviewer, whom I have already quoted [p. 478, n. 1], considers the Romance of Havelok, “more strongly impregnated with Danish, than any known work of the same period,” which appears “not only in individual words, but in various grammatical inflexions, and, most remarkably, in the dropping of the final *d* after liquids—*shel, hel, hon, behel*—which exactly accords with the present pronunciation of the Danes.” *Quart. Rev.* cx. 3. Now in all discussions, relating to language, it is most important, to illustrate *rule by example*. Of the “grammatical inflexions,” the reviewer has given us no specimen. I can find none. As to the dropping of the final *d*, I would merely ask, if *this* be a test of the Dano-English, where can we escape from that dialect? If we travel to the south, have we not, using the orthography of Jennings, the *veel, mill* (Shakespeare’s *nield*), *chile*, &c. the *hon, ston, roun, groun, mine, behine*, &c. of Somerset? If to the north, have we not the *scaul, warl, chiel*, &c. the *han, stan, en, frien, min, kin, behin*, &c. of Nithsdale?



likely that peculiarities of dialect have vanished, with all recollection of their origin? <sup>1</sup>

Some parts, however, of the British islands were *wholly* peopled with Northmen—as the Orkneys, Caithness, and much of the eastern coast north of Forth. Harrison,<sup>2</sup> writing in the year 1576, tells us, that in the Orkneys<sup>3</sup> “and such coasts of Britaine as do abbut upon the same, the Gottish or Danish speech is altogether in use,” but afterwards<sup>4</sup> qualifies this, by talking of “*some sparks* yet remaining among them of that language.” Perhaps, if the history of these dialects were traced out, and the process investigated by which they melted into English, we might by analogy discover, if our other dialects had been affected by the intrusion of the Northman.

In tracing the subdivisions of our three great dialects, I have made the vowels the test, rather than the consonants, as being, on the whole, less subject to derangement from external causes. A word, imported from the written language of the period, generally carried with it its own peculiar consonants; thus we have *fader* in the Coventry mysteries, though the provincial term is, and probably has been for the last thousand years, *faether*. But the vowel was generally accommodated to the pronunciation of the district; thus *spite* in Staffordshire became *spoite*, *note* in the West Riding became *noite*, and a little further north *crown* became *crawn*. The districts, however, in which these vowel sounds prevail, and the periods to which we may refer their origin, can only be marked out within limits that leave much room for uncertainty.

In ancient MSS. (as in provincial speech) we have the local dialect almost always more or less modified by the written language—as in Burns' poems, we find his native

<sup>1</sup> Seththe hath Engclond y-be y-werred y-lome  
Of the folc of Denemark, that beth noght yet wel y-some.

*Rob. of Gloucester*, p. 3, l. 10.

(The Arundel MS. has—that were nought welcome).

<sup>2</sup> *Descr. of Brittain*, c. 6.

<sup>3</sup> Of the Shetlanders he says, “their speech is Gothish,” c. 10.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* c. 10.

Ayrshire combining, in almost every proportion, with our standard English.<sup>1</sup> Now, many obsolete grammatical forms (the Southern conjugation for instance) were once well-known to our *literature*, and, therefore, will not enable us to fix the country of the writer; but the inflexions of the Northern conjugation, and the Southern *v* will generally be decisive; and as (before the year 1350) one or other of these peculiarities was seldom absent from MSS. written elsewhere than in the midland counties, we have, in most cases, a ready method of distinguishing between a northern, a midland, and a southern MS.

Again, during the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the subjunctive mood seems to have been *very widely* used, instead of the indicative; in some MSS.<sup>2</sup> indeed, almost to its entire exclusion. The third person singular of the Eastern dialect, and the Staffordshire plural, may, very probably, be relics of this usage. They now strike the ear as marked peculiarities, but would not, I think, justify speculations as to *radical*, or even very ancient differences of dialect.

To separate the native growth of any dialect from these various importations, to define the time when, and the degree in which it has yielded to the written language, requires research at once extensive and minute. The great fault, however, of our modern philology is that common vice of theory—the arguing from *too remote analogies*. Our critics wander to the dialects of the Heptarchy, or to the “Scandinavian,” or to the Greek and Latin, when they should be diving into our MSS. and seeking illustration in our dialects, as spoken some four or five centuries ago. Such research may be obscure labour, and the produce not

1

“Forsuth I set my bissey pane,  
As that I couth, to mak it braid and plane,  
Kepand na sudron, bot our awyn langage,  
And spekis as I lernyt quhen I was page.  
Na yit sa cleyn all sudron I refus,  
Bot sum word I pronunce as nyghtbouris dois.”

G. Douglas; *Prol. to Virgil*.

\* Such MSS. are found written *both* in the Southern and in the Northern dialect.

always very malleable to a theory; but it holds out good promise of leading to the *truth*,—which will hardly be reached by the vague speculations of the indolent and dreaming antiquary.

Our older critics and dramatists have left us occasional notices of our dialects, which have, I think, been too much neglected. Some of these have been already referred to; but there is one, which is more than usually instructive, and as it serves in some measure to illustrate the views already advanced, I shall lay it before the reader. It is found in the *Logonomia Anglica* of Gill, the well-known Master of St. Paul's;<sup>1</sup> and was written about the year 1619.

This scholar divided our language into six dialects. Of these, two were the *Common* and the *Poetical*. The remaining four were the *Northern*, to which he seems to have given nearly the same limits we have assigned to it; the *Eastern*, in which he seems to have included the Essex and the Middlesex; the *Southern*, which appears to have spread over the southern counties east of Wiltshire; and finally, the *Western*.

To the men of the midland counties he assigns no particular dialect, doubtless considering them as speaking that variety of English, which he designated as the *Common* dialect. He thus begins his notice of our Northern English.<sup>2</sup>

“*Ai* is used, in the north, for the long *i*, as *faier* for *fier* (fire); and *au* for *ou*, as *gaun* or even *geaun* for *gown*, and also for the sound of *oo*, as *waund* for *wound*. They also often use *ea* for the long *e*, as *meat*—(with the diphthong clearly pronounced); and for *o*, as *beath* for *both*. Even in my own county of Lincoln, you may hear *toaz* and *hoaz*, for *toes* and *hose*. They say also, *kest* or even *kussen*, instead of *cast*; *fulla* instead of *follow*; *klōth* with a long *o*, instead of *cloth*; and on the contrary, *spokn* with a short

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<sup>1</sup> The master, too, who taught Milton!

<sup>2</sup> As we have to translate from a very peculiar orthography into our ordinary modes of spelling, I have been obliged to take occasional liberties with the Latin, to make the pronunciation of some words intelligible.

*o*, instead of *spoken*; *doon* for *done*; and *toom* for *time*; <sup>1</sup> *rich* <sup>2</sup> with a long *i*, instead of *rich*; *thore* instead of *there*; *breeks* instead of *breeches*, *seln* instead of *self*; *hez* <sup>3</sup> instead of *hath*; *aus* for *also*; *sud* for *should*; *Il*, *Ist* and even *Ail* and *Aist* for *I will*; and so in the other persons *thoult* or *thoust*, &c. In *ay* they throw away the *i*, as *paa* for *pay*; *saa* for *say*; and for *said* they use *sed*.<sup>4</sup> Some words they invent,<sup>5</sup> in place of the more common ones, as *strunt* and *runt* for *rump*, and *sark* for *shirt*. *Gang* in the place of *go* (whence *gangrel* a beggar), and *yeed* or *yode* for *went*, they got from their ancestors.

“The people of the south use *oo* for the long *e*, as *hoo* for *he*; also *v* for *f*, as *vill* for *fill*, *vetch* for *fetch*; <sup>6</sup> and on the contrary *f* for *v*, as *finegar* and *ficcar* for *vinegar* and *vicar*.<sup>7</sup> They use also *o* for *a*, as *ronk* for *rank*; *z* for *s*, as *zing* for *sing*; and *ich* for *I*, *cham* for *I am*, *chill* for *I will*, *chi voor ye* for *I warrant ye*. They also resolve the diphthong *ay*, and most odiously lengthen the first vowel, as *paa-y*, *thaa-y*, for *pay* and *they*.<sup>8</sup>

1

I sal yow tel, if I have *tome*,Of the seven Sages of Rome.—*The Sewyn Sages*, l. 4.

Weber supposes the word to have been altered “for the sake of the rime.” [The truth is very different. The M. E. *tome*, Lincolnshire *toom*, meaning “leisure,” is a totally different word from *time*. Moreover, *toom* is Scandinavian; *time* is English.—W. W. S.]

<sup>2</sup> This word in South Lancashire becomes *roitck*, according to the analogy which regulates the vowels of that district.

<sup>3</sup> Long after the southern conjugation had generally yielded to the northern, it kept possession of the auxiliary verb *to have*. Even at the close of the eighteenth century, Fielding always puts *hath* into the mouth of his fine gentlemen and ladies; and, I believe, this word is still used in some parts of the South of England, even by the educated classes.

<sup>4</sup> Here is another provincial term, which has now become licensed.

<sup>5</sup> The reader will often see reason to dissent from the *speculations* of the author.

<sup>6</sup> This use of *v* for *f*, *z* for *s*, and *ich* for *I*, clearly shows that, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, the western dialect was spoken *south* of London.

<sup>7</sup> In Bedfordshire, they still say *fenum* and *foluntine* for *venom* and *valentine*. Other instances of this change should be collected.

<sup>8</sup> It is to be regretted, that this dialect has been so much neglected. The Wealds of Kent and Sussex abound in peculiarities of idiom, which, if collected,

"On the other hand, the men of the eastern counties narrow their vowels, for they say *feer* instead of *fier* (fire); *hiver* instead of *cover*; and use *ea* for the long *a*, as *deans* for *dance*; *v* for *f*, as *vellow* for *fellow*; *z* for *s*, as *zai* for *say*.<sup>1</sup> Our Mopsæ πυγώστολοι particularly affect this ισχνόντι,<sup>2</sup> and narrow their letters to such a degree, that it would seem they hated an *o* or an *a*, as much as Appius Claudius a *z*. Thus our dames do not buy *loun* and *cambric*, but *leen* and *keembric*; nor do they eat a *capon*, but a *keepn*; nor does their mouth water for *butchers' meat*, but *bitchers' meat*. And as they are all *gentlimmen* (not *gentlwimmen*), they call their servants, not *maids*, but *meeds*. I must however retract what I have said of the *a*, for whenever a full-sounding *o* should be heard, they make it give place to this letter, and many a time do they come mincing to me, *I pree ya gee yar skallers leev ta plee*, that is, *I pray you give your scholars leave to play*.

"But of all our dialects none equal the *Western* in barbarism, especially if you hear it spoken by the country people of Somerset; for one might well doubt, whether they spoke English, or some foreign idiom. They still use certain antiquated words, as *sax* a knife, and *nem* or *nim* to take. Others of their own they palm upon us for English, as *laz* a part, *toit* a settle, and some others. But even genuine words they corrupt, either by giving them a false meaning, or by their mode of pronouncing them, as *weezwai* a bridle; *weetpot* a sausage;<sup>3</sup> *ha vang*, throw here, or catch what is thrown; *hee vang tu me at vant*, he undertook for me at font (baptism);<sup>4</sup> *zit am*, sit; *zadraith*,<sup>5</sup> essay thereof, that is,

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might throw the most important light on the structure of our language. Indeed any of the agricultural districts round London would well repay the attention of the philologist.

<sup>1</sup> Hence it appears, that, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, some of the counties *east* of London used the *v* and the *z*, instead of the corresponding whisper-letters. Essex and Middlesex were no doubt in the author's eye. See p. 480.

<sup>2</sup> [Rather, ισχνόντια, thinness.—W. W. S.]

<sup>3</sup> *Farcimen*.

<sup>4</sup> See Hearn's Glossary to Robert of Gloucester, s.v. *vonge*.

<sup>5</sup> Here we have *dr* for *thr*, see p. 486; and *th* for *f*, as in Leicestershire they still say, *thurrow* for *furrow*. We might write the words "*za draith*."

taste; *hee iz gone avist*, he is gone a fishing. So also they say *throtteen* for *thirteen*, *narger* for narrower, *sorger* for more sorrowful. They also prefix *i* to those participles, which begin with a consonant, as *ifrore* or *ivrore* for frozen; *hav ye idoo*, have ye done; they also vary, in the plural, those nouns ending in *se*, which in the common dialect remain unchanged, as *hozn*, *peezn*, instead of *hose* and *pease*."<sup>1</sup>

Lengthy as this digression has proved, it has been much too short for the full discussion of a question, so intricate and difficult, as that of our local dialects. The peculiarities, which characterize these dialects, are not easily confined, or preserved within bounds and limits. They spread occasionally to the neighbouring shires; and, in some cases, are only to be gleaned from such scattered and remote villages, as have not yet been reached by the ravages of the schoolmaster. It is however hoped, that some assistance has been rendered to the student; and that he will be enabled to form, at least, some loose notion of the dialect, in which a particular MS. has been written. But if he be wise, he will aid his judgment with all the helps that can be furnished by the history of such MS., the nature of its contents, and the notices which may have been taken of them by other writers.

In Ormin's dialect, we find none of those features which mark distinctively either the northern or the southern dialect. He changes the *th* into *t*, when it follows a word ending with *d* or *t*; <sup>2</sup> but this seems to have been the only peculiarity in his pronunciation. His verb takes the southern inflexions, but *eth* is always used in the third person, never, I think, *th*; the *i* conjugation seems to have been unknown to him, and he drops the *e* of the second person singular in the past tense of the "complex" verb, as *thu badd*, thou bad'st, *thu behett*, thou promised'st. The declensions of his substantives are very simple. The

<sup>1</sup> The substantives in *se*, very commonly, form their plural in *en*, even in the midland counties; thus we hear, *housen*, *plazen*, *closen*, and even *horsen*.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 483, n. 4.

masculines and neuters take *es* in the plural and genitive singular, and sometimes, it would seem, *e* in the dative singular; the neuters, however, sometimes have their plural without inflexion, as in the Anglo-Saxon. The feminine nouns take *e*, in the genitive, dative, and accusative of both numbers; but, in the genitive singular, have sometimes the *es*, as is also the case with the older dialect. The definite adjective ends in *e*, and occasionally, as it would appear, in *en*; the indefinite adjective forms its plural in *e*, but takes no other inflexion.

His nouns are sometimes formed with endings different from those which are found in the Anglo-Saxon. Thus the ending *nis* becomes a dissyllable *nesse*, whence our modern *ness*; and the adjectival ending *lic*, though sometimes represented by *-ligg*, seems more generally to take two syllables, *-lice*.

It may be observed, that the final *e* is always elided before a word beginning with a vowel or with *h*; and that *to* coalesces with its verb, as *tunnderrstanndenn*, to understand.

Nu bro|therr Wall|terr<sup>1</sup> bro|therr min|: afterr | the flesch|ess kin de.  
 And bro|therr min | i criss|tenndom|: thurh ful|luhht and | thurh  
 troww|the .  
 And bro|therr min | i god|ess hus|: get o | the thrid|e wis|e .  
 Thurh thatt | witt haf|enn tak|enn ba|: an regh|ell-boc | to foll-  
 ghenn .  
 Vnderr | kanunn|kess had | . and lif|: swa summ | sannt Awws|tin .  
 sette .  
 Icc haf|e don | swa summ | thu badd|: and forth|eddte<sup>2</sup> | thin  
 wil|le .  
 Icc haf|e wennd | inntill | Ennglissh|: goddspell|ess hall|ghe lar|e .  
 Afterr | that lit|tle witt | tatt me|: min drihh|tin haf|ethth len|edd .

It would seem, this plan was not much favoured by

<sup>1</sup> This word I have spelt with two *r*'s, but in the MS. it is written with the common contraction *wallt*<sup>e</sup>; so also *afft*<sup>e</sup>, and some others. I would here observe, there are certain marks in the MS. the use and object of which I do not fully understand. It ought to be published, and all its peculiarities investigated. [It has now been twice edited; once by Dr. White, in 1852; and recently by Mr. Holt.—W. W. S.]

If I were called upon to say, in what part of England a dialect such as Ormin's was ever spoken, I should fix upon some county north of Thames, and south of Lincolnshire. That portion of the Chronicle, which contains the same permutation of the *th*, as we find in the Ormulum, was, in all probability, written by one of the monks of Peterborough; and it is, by no means, unlikely, that Ormin lived in one of the neighbouring shires. The critics, who made him a native of the east of England, though they guessed in the dark, may not have guessed wrongly.

Ormin professes to have collected together in his Ormulum, "nigh all the Gospels, that are in the mass-book, through all the year, at mass," and to have accompanied each "Gospel," with an exposition of its meaning. His brother, who like himself appears to have been a Regular Canon, suggested to him this plan, as we learn from the following affectionate address [at the commencement]:

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Now brother Walter, brother mine : after nature of the flesh,  
 And brother mine, in Christendom : by baptism and by faith,  
 And brother mine in God's house : yet in the third wise,  
 For that we two have taken both : *one* rule-book to follow,  
 In the Canon's rank and life : e'en as Saint Austin ruled—  
 I have done e'en as thou bad'st : and forwarded thy will;  
 I have turn'd into English : the gospel's holy lore,  
 After the little knowledge that : to me my Lord hath lent.

---

some of his brother churchmen; but Ormin's firmness was equal to his piety [ll. 73-90 of the Introduction].

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<sup>2</sup> I presume this is a compound, *forthed te*, that is, *forwarded for thee*. Mr. Thorpe, who has quoted this passage in his *Analecta*, supposes *forthedte* to represent the Anglo-Saxon *forthode*; but in this place we want *not* the perfect tense, but the participle. [The MS. has *forthedd te*, two separate words; see the fac-simile in Dr. White's edition.—W. W. S.]



Witt shul|enn tred|enn unn|derrfott|: and all | thwerret ut | forwerr'  
penn .

The dom | off all | thatt lath|e flocc|: that iss | thurrr nith | for-  
blen|dedd .

Thatt tæl|ethth thatt | to lof|enn iss|: thurrr nith|full mod|ignes'e .

Thegg shul|enn læt|enn hæth|elig|: off unn|ker swinnē | lef bro|ther.  
And all | thegg shul|enn tak|enn itt|: onn un|nitt and | onn i|dell .  
Acc nohht | thurrr skill | acc all | thurh nith|: and all | thurh  
thegg|re sin|ne .

And unne | birrth bid|denn Godd | tatt he|: forrgif|e hemm her e  
sin|ne .

And unne | birrth bath|e lof|enn Godd|: off thatt | itt wass | bigun-  
nenn .

And thannk|enn Godd | tatt itt | iss brohht|: till en|de thurhh | his  
hellp|e .

The following are the reflections suggested by the miracle at Cana. They may afford us a fair sample of Ormin's style; and, at the same time, a curious specimen

This mid|dellærd|ess ald | iss all|: o sex|e dal|ess dæl|edd .

Fra thatt | tatt ad|am sha|penn wass|: anan | till noth|ess ti|me .

All thatt | fresst off | thiss werl|deas ald|: wass all | the forr|me  
tim|e .

And all | thiss firrs|te ti|mess fresst|: wass o|pennlig | bitac|nedd .

I ca|na gal|ile | thurrr an|: off tha | stanen|e fet|less .

And all | thiss firrs|te ti|me wass|: thurrr hall|ghe wit|ess fill|edd .

Off staff|lig wit|eghunn|gess drinnch | : thurrr writ|ess . and | thurh  
werr|kess .

Rihht swa | summ all | thatt ti|mess fresst|: off wa|terr fil|ledd  
wæ|re .

And itt | wass turr|nedd inn | till win|: thurhh ie|su cris|tess com e .

Thurrr thatt | het<sup>1</sup> gaff | hiss hall|ghe folle|: gastlik|e tunn|derr-  
stann|denn .

And her | iss o | thiss boc | off that|: stafflik|e wit|eghunnng|e .

That all | thatt forr|me ti|me wass|: thurrr wit|ess fil|ledd off e .

Swa summ | the firrst|e fet|less wass|: breddfull | off wa|terr  
fill|edd .

And her | I se | summdel | off thatt|: stafflik|e wit|eghunnng|e .

And icc | itt wil|e shæw|enn guw|: all forr | ure all|re ned|e .

<sup>1</sup> I suspect, in this place, some error in my copy of the MS. {The MS. has *het*, with two accents over the *e*; Dr. Guest printed *hæt* in the former edition.

We two should tread under our foot : and out all from us cast  
 The notion of all that hateful crew : that is with malice blinded,  
 That blameth what deserveth praise : in their malicious pride.

*They* would hinder in their hate : our labour ! brother dear,  
 And all they would look on it : as useless and as idle !  
 With *reason* not, but all in *hate* : and all through their sins !  
 And us befits to pray to God : that he forgive their sins ;  
 And us befits both God to praise : for that it was begun,  
 And God to thank that it is brought : to end, all by his help.

---

of the manner in which Scripture was allegorized during the  
 twelfth century [ll. 14426-14507].

---

The age of this mid earth is all : into six parts divided.  
 From thence that Adam shapen was : right on to Noah's time,  
 All the course of this world's eld : was all the earliest period.  
 And all this first period's course : was openly betoken'd,  
 In Cana Galilee, by one : of the stonern vessels.  
 And all this first period was : by holy sages fill'd  
 With drink of letter'd prophecy : by writings and by works ;  
 Right as if all that period's course : with water filled were,  
 And it was turned into wine : by Jesu Christ his coming,  
 For that [he gave it] his holy folk *in sp'rit* to understand it.

And here is somewhat (in this book) : of that letter'd prophecy,  
 Whereof all that first period : by sages filled was,  
 Like as the first vessel was : brimful with water fill'd.  
 And here I see some portion : of that letter'd prophecy ;  
 And I will shew it unto you : all for our common wants.

---

with the translation "it gave." The word means *as it*, two words being run  
 into one.—W. W. S.]

Caym | adam | es son | e toc : nith gæn | abæl | hiss bro | therr .  
 Off that | he sah | that he | wass god : and riht | wis man | and  
 clen | e .  
 Forr def | less theww | ess haf | enn agg : strang nith | gæn cris less  
 theww | ess .  
 And cris | tess theww | ess bid | denn crist : that he | theggm thurrh |  
 hiss ar | e .  
 And thurrh | his mill | ce gif | e mahht : to bet | enn thegg | re sin | ne .  
 And Ca | ym toc | thurrh he | te and nith : abæl | hiss agh | enn bro -  
 therr .  
 And led | de himm ut | upp o | the feld : and sloh | himm but | enn  
 gillt | e .  
 And giff | thu bis | ne tak | enn willt : off thiiss | e twegg enn  
 breth | re .  
 To foll | ghen | god | ess theww | abæl : and hiss | unnskath | inesse .  
 And to | forrwer | penn het | e and nith : and all | caym | es bis | ne .  
 Tha tak | esst tu | thatt witt | tu wel : vt off | the forr | me ti | me .  
 Stafflik | e drinnch | ga to | thin lif : ga to | thin sawl | e bath | e .  
 Thatt mik | ell magg | the gegg | nenn her : to winn | enn heff | new  
 bliss | e .  
 Alls iff | thu drunn | ke wa | terr - drinnch : vt off | the firr | te  
 fet | less .  
 Thatt magg | the slekk | enn wel | thin thirrst : giff thatt | is thatt  
 te thirrs | teth .  
 And giff | thu thiiss | thurrh hal | ig gast : deplik | err unn | derr-  
 stann | desst .  
 Thatt a | bel thatt | all gill | teless : wass slag | enn thurrh | hiss bro -  
 therr .  
 Bitac | nethth u | re laf | errd crist : thatt nagg | led wass | o rod | e .  
 Thurrh thatt | iudiss | kenn hæf | edd folc : thatt he | was bor | enn  
 of | fe .  
 And wass | himm onn | hiss mo | derr halff : sibb alls | itt wa | re  
 hiss bro | therr .  
 Tha tak | esst tu | gastlik | e witt : off staff | lig wit | eghunng | e :  
 And drinnk | esst ta | thatt win | thatt iss : ut off | the watr  
 wharf | -edd .  
 That win | thatt turru | enn magg | thin thohht : thurrh gast | lig  
 drunnk | ennes | se .  
 Al fra | the werri | dess luf | e and lust : and fra | the fæsh | es  
 wil | le .  
 To foll | ghen agg | anwherr | fedlegge : to win | nenn heff | ness bliss e  
 Fra noth | ess fiod | till ab | raham : wass all | thatt o | therr ti | me , &c .

<sup>1</sup> This name was thus written with an *m*, even so late as the fifteenth century : see the Towneley Mysteries, *Iudicium*, p. 317.

Ye cursid catyfs of *Kames kyn*.

Caŷm<sup>1</sup> Adam's son conceived : hate gainst his brother Abel,  
For that he saw that he was good : and righteous man and pure ;  
(For the devil's ministers have aye : strong hate 'gainst Christ his  
servants !

And Christ his servants Christ beseech : that he them—through his  
mercy,

And through his pity—may give strength : to amend their sins !)

And Caŷm in his hate and malice : took Abel his own brother,

And led him out upon the field : and *slew* him—without guilt !

And if thou wilt example take : by these brethren twain—  
To follow God's own servant Abel : and his guiltlessness,  
And far cast from thee hate and malice : and all Caŷm's example—  
Then takest thou (that wot thou well) : from out of the first period,  
Scripture-drink, both for thy life : and for thy soul both,  
That much may gain thee here : tow'rds winning heaven's bliss ;  
As if thou had'st drunk water-drink : from out of the first period,  
That well for thee may slake thy thirst : if so be that thou thirstest.

And if thou this by the holy ghost : *more deeply* understandest—  
That Abel, who all guiltless was : slain by his own brother,  
Betokeneth our Lord Christ : that nail'd was on the rood,  
By that Jewish tribe : whereof he was born,  
And was to him on's mother's side : kin, as it were a brother,  
Then takest thou the sp'ritual sense : of scripture prophecy,  
And drinkest then the wine that is : from out the water changed—  
The wine that may convert thy thought : through sp'ritual drunken-  
ness,

All from this world's love and lust : and from the flesh's will,

To follow aye unchangingly : to win thee Heaven's bliss.

From Noah's flood to Abraham : was all the *second* period, &c.

As our limits are narrow, we will omit the story of the Deluge; and proceed, with Ormin, in search of the moral

Godd segg|de thus | till ab|raham|: tac y|saac| thin wenn|chell.  
 And snith | itt alls | itt wæ|re an shep|: and legg | itt upp | onn  
 all|terr .  
 And brenn | itt all | till ass|kess thær|: and of|fre itt me | to lak e .  
 And ab|raham | wass forrth|rihht bun|: to don | drihhtin|es wil|le .  
 And toc | hiss sun|e son|e anan|: and band | itt fet | and hand|e .  
 And legg|de itt upp | onn all|terr swa|: and droh | hiss sward | off  
 shæth|e .  
 And hoff | the sward | upp withth | hiss hannd|: to smit|enn itt |  
 to dæd|e .  
 Forrthat | he woll|de ben | till godd|: herrsumm | onn all|e wis|e .  
 And godd | sahþ that | he woll|de slæn|: the child | withth  
 sward|ess egg|e .  
 And segg|de thus | till hab|raham|: thatt witt | tu wel | to soth|e .  
 Hald ab|raham | hald upp | thin hand|: ne sla | thu nohht | tin  
 wenn|chell .  
 Nu wat | i thatt | tu dræd|est godd|: and luf|esst godd | withth herr|te .  
 Tacc thær | an shep | bafftenn | thin bacc|: and off|re itt forr | the  
 wenn|chell .  
 And ab|raham | tha snath | thatt shep|: and let | his sun|e libb|enn .  
 Forr thatt | he wolld|e ben | till godd|: herrsumm | onn al|le wis|e .  
 And giff | thu nim | est mi|kel gom|: till ab|raham|es ded|e .  
 And giff | thu tak | esst bis|ne att himm|: to foll|ghenn herr|summa-  
 ness|e .  
 To wurr|thenn herr|summ till | drihhtin|: to theww|tenn himm | to  
 cwem|e .  
 To lak|enn himm | withth thatt | tatt himm|: iss lef|east off | thin  
 ahht|e .  
 To wurr|then herr|summ to | thin prest|: and till | thin tun|ess  
 laf|errd .  
 Till al|le tha | that haf|enn the|: to ge|menn and | to ster|enn .  
 To ben | herrsumm | till al|le tha|: inn al|le god|e thing|e .  
 Forr niss | nan herr|summnness|e sett|: to for|thennn if|ell-ded|e .  
 Giff thatt | tu foll|ghesst tuas | the sloth|: off a|braham|es bis|ne .  
 Tha tak | est tu | thatt witt | tu wel|: vt off | the thridd|e ti|me .  
 Stafflik|e drinnch | god to | thin lif|: and to | thin sawl|e bathe .  
 That magg | the mik|ell geng|enn her | &c .  
 And giff | thu thiss | thurrrh ha|lig gast|: deplik|err unn|derrstaa-  
 dest .  
 Thatt ab|raham | onn hæf|edd iss|: the fa|derr upp | off heff|ne  
 And tatt | hiss wenn|chel y|saac|: iss cris|tess godd|cunndnes|se  
 And tatt | hiss shep | thatt off | redd was|: iss cris|tess menn ix-  
 ness|e .

and type furnished us by the events of the *third* period  
[ll. 14664-14716, 14722-14740].

God said thus to Abraham : " take Isäac thy little one,  
" And slay him, as he were a sheep : and lay him on an altar,  
" And burn him all to ashes there : and off'r him a gift to me."  
And Abraham was straightway boon : to do the Lord his will,  
And took his son quickly anon : and bound him feet and hands,  
And laid him on an altar so : and drew his sword from sheath,  
And rais'd the sword up with his hand : to smite him to the death—  
For that he would be unto God : obedient in all wise !

And God saw that he would slay : the child with edge of sword,  
And said thus to Abraham : (that wot thou well as sooth)  
" Hold, Abraham, hold up thine hand : do not thou slay thy little one,  
" Now wot I that thou darest God : and lov'st God with thine heart ;  
" Take there a sheep behind thy back : and off'r it for thy child."  
And Abraham then slew the sheep : and his son let live—  
For that he would be unto God : obedient in all wise !

And if thou takest mickle heed : unto Abraham's act,  
And tak'st example by him : obedience to follow,  
To be obedient to the Lord : to serve and so to please him,  
To offer him what to him is : dearest of all thy goods,  
To be obedient to thy priest : and to thy household's master,  
To all those, whoso have thee : to care for, and to govern—  
To be obedient to all these : in all *righteous things*,  
For no obedience is enjoin'd : to further evil deeds—  
If that thou followest thus the track : of Abraham's example,  
Then takest thou (that wot thou well) : from out of the third period,  
Scripture-drink good for thy life : and for thy soul both  
That much may gain thee here : tow'rd winning heaven's bliss,  
As if thou hadst drunk water-drink, &c.

And if thou this, by the holy ghost : *more deeply* understandest,  
That Abraham, in *first place* ?<sup>1</sup> is : the Father on high of Heaven,  
And that his young child Isäac : is Christ's divinity,  
And that his sheep that off'ed was : is Christ's humanity,

---

<sup>1</sup> [Lit. in chief, especially.—W. W. S.]

That off|redd wass | forr all | mannkinn | : to tho|lenn deth | o  
 rod|e .  
 Swa thatt | hiss -godd|cunndness|e wass | : all cwicc | . and all  
 unnpin|edd .  
 Allswa | summy|saac | attbrasst|: unnwun|deddand | unnwemm|edd.  
 Tha tak|esst tu | gastlik|e witt|: off staff|lig wit|eghunng|e  
 And drinn|keest ta | thatt win | thatt iss | : vt off | the wa|terr  
 wharrf|edd .  
 Thatt win | thatt turr|nenn magg | thin thohht | &c.

If a judgment may be formed from such extracts as I have made, (and, though certainly a very small portion of the whole, they are nevertheless copious,) I would say that the doctrines of the Ormulum are singularly free from those fatal errors, which the policy of Rome had, at length, succeeded in forcing upon our Church. To appreciate this merit at its full value, we must remember that there are still extant the sermons of contemporary *bishops*, in which it is hard to say, whether folly or blasphemy most predominate. Lawrence, prior of Durham—a churchman neither mean in station nor in talents—had already clothed his favourite Saint with all the attributes of our Saviour; and Walter Mapes, while lashing with fearless hand the ignorance and the vices of the Romish clergy, seems nevertheless to have holden the worship of the Virgin as the first duty of a priest. Amid heathenism like this, we may forgive Ormin, if, in the honesty of his zeal, he sometime strain a text of scrip-

Ol|de ant yong|e i | preit<sup>1</sup> ou|: oure fol|ies for | to let|e  
 Thench|et on god | that yef | ou wit|: oure sun|nes to bet|e  
 Her|e i | mai tel|len ou|: wid word|es feir|e ant swet|e  
 The vi|e of on|e mei|dan : was hot|en Mar|egret|e  
 Hire fad|er was | a pat|riac|: as ic | ou tel|len mai|  
 In Aun|tiog|e wif | eches|: i | the fals|e lay|  
 Dev|e god|es ant doum|be : he ser|ved nitt | and day|  
 So ded|en mon|y oth|ere|: that sing|et wei|laway|

<sup>1</sup> Most of his refinements may be traced to the Fathers. His curious conceit, with respect to Adam's name, originated, I believe, with Lactantius. He supposes, that the name of *Adam* was formed from the initial letters of the four

That off' red was for all mankind : on the cross to suffer death—  
 So that his godly nature was : all living and unpained,  
 E'en so as Isäac escaped : unwounded and uninjured ;  
 Then takest thou the *sp'ritual* sense : of scripture-prophecy,  
 And drinkest then the wine that is : from out the water changed,  
 The wine that may convert thy thought ; &c.

ture, or lose himself in the subtleties,<sup>1</sup> with which man had encumbered the plain truths of Revelation. The Church, that could rank *him* in the number of its ministers, had not wholly lost its christianity.

The reader need hardly be told, that Ormin's rhythm is the "common metre," which is so often met with in our hymn-books. The only change is, that each verse is there divided into two.

The Psalm-metres seem, at a very early period, to have been influenced by our native rhythms ; and their flow is sometimes so loose, that it is difficult to say which of the Latin "rhythmi" they were meant to imitate. Traces of the "common metre" may, I think, be found in the Life of Saint Margaret, an early metrical legend, which Hickes has published in his *Thesaurus* [vol. i. p. 224]. It opens with the following staves :

Old and young I pray you : your follies for to leave ;  
 Think on God who gave you wit : your sins to amend,  
 Here may I tell you : with words fair and sweet,  
 The life of a maiden : was called Maregrete.

Her father was a patrician : as I may tell to you,  
 In Antioch a wife he chose : in the false law ;  
 Deaf gods and dumb : he served night and day,  
 So did many others : that sing—Welaway !

quarters of the world—*Anatolia* or the east, *Dosis* or the west, *Arktos* or the north, *Mesembria* or the south.

<sup>1</sup> The words *preit*, *folie*, *vie*, are a clear proof that this Legend was translated from the Romance. [*Preit* is obviously an error for *preis*.—W. W. S.]



The|odo|sius was | is nom|e : on crist | ne lev|ede he noutt|  
 He lev|ede on | the fal|se god|es : that wer|en wid hond|en wroutt|  
 Tho | that child scul|de chris|tine ben| : it com | him well | in thoutt|  
 E bed | wen it wer|e ibor|e : to deth|e it wer|e ibroutt| &c.

This rhythm is more clearly traced in another poem, which Hickes has published. It appears to have been written in the first half of the thirteenth century; and is found both in an Oxford, and in a Cambridge MS.<sup>2</sup> The latter has each verse written at length, in one line; but the

Ic | am el|der than|ne ic wes| : a win|tre and ec | a lor|e  
 Ic eal|di mor|e than|ne ic ded|e : mi wit | oghte to | be mor|e  
 Wel long|e ic hab|be child | ibien| : on word|e and | on ded|e  
 Thegh | ic bi | on win|tru<sup>3</sup> eald| : to giung | ic am | on red|e  
 Un|net lif | ic hab|de iled| : and giet | me thinch | ic led|e  
 Than|ne ic me | bithench|e wel| : wel sor|e ic me | adred|e &c.

The Cambridge MS. though on the whole less accurate than the Oxford, seems to have preserved the two first verses more correctly.

Ic am | nu el|der than|ne ic wæs| : a wintre and a lore  
 Ic weal|de mor|e than | i dud|e : mi wit | oh to | be mor|e

If we restore the *ec*, which seems to have dropped, by accident, from the first line, we shall have the rhythm of these two verses, as perfect as any in the Ormulum, except that the second verse lengthens its first section—a license which is very commonly taken in all the early imitations of the Latin “rhythmi.”

Besides several detached lives of Saints, in our Old-English dialect, there was also a *collection* of these metrical

<sup>1</sup> That is, “He had a supernatural presentiment.”

<sup>2</sup> [And in other MSS., viz. MS. Lambeth 487, MS. Egerton 613. See *Old English Homilies*, ed. Morris, i. 158, 288.—W. W. S.]

<sup>3</sup> Digby, 4.

<sup>4</sup> That is, “I have more power and influence,” &c. [The right reading is *wealde* or *welde*.—W. W. S.]

Theodosius was his name : on Christ believ'd he not,  
 He believed in the false gods : that were with hands ywrought !  
 Then, that the child would a Christian be : 'twas borne full into his  
     thought<sup>1</sup>—  
 He bade when it was born : to death it should be brought, &c.

---

other MS. divides each verse into two. The following is the opening of the poem, according to my own copy of the Oxford MS.<sup>3</sup> save only that the verses are here written at length.

---

I am older than I was : in winters and eke in lore,  
 I wield<sup>4</sup> more than I did : my wit ought to be more.

Full long I have a child y-been : in word and in deed,  
 Though I be in winters old : too young I be in judgment.

A useless life I have y-led : and yet methinks I lead,  
 When I well bethink me : full sore am I afear'd, &c.

---

legends, which may possibly date soon after the year 1200. The lives appear to have been the work of different writers, and their number is not always the same in different MSS.<sup>6</sup> They are mostly written in a tumbling rhythm, which is seemingly an imitation of the Catalectic Iambic Tetrameter. Copious extracts may be found in Warton.

The rhythm, which Robert of Gloucester uses in his Chronicle, is of the same kind. Specimens of it have been already given, in book ii. ch. 7.<sup>7</sup>

It is sometimes hard to say, whether this species of tumbling verse be the rhythm originally designed by the author, or merely the coarse caricature to which it has been reduced by accumulated blunders of transcription. It is

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<sup>5</sup> This word is written in my copy *wint'u*, but the last letter may possibly be an *n*. In such case, we should read *wintren*. [Read *wintre*, as in other MSS.; see the first line of the quotation.—W. W. S.]

<sup>6</sup> The life of St. Margaret, already quoted, is seldom absent.

<sup>7</sup> Pp. 262, 270, 276.

probable, that when the psalm-metres first came into fashion, the rhythm of the Latin original was strictly followed, and that, when it was corrupted, by passing through the hands of the copyist, it was still looked up to as authority, and gradually gave currency to the tumbling rhythm, which was common in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. I think, however, that many poems must have been written, during that period, with a more correct versification; for several kinds of *staves*, formed from these psalm-metres, have come down to us, which admit of a very definite scansion.

During the sixteenth century, the rhythm of our poetry, generally, was tied to greater strictness; and in the year 1589, Abraham Fleming translated the *Bucolics* and *Georgics* into the same kind of unrimed metre as is found in the *Ormulum*, but the lengthening syllable was only used occasionally.

O mu|ses of | Sicil|ia ile| : lets great|er matt|ers sing|  
Shrubs, groves | and bush|es lowe | delight| : and please | not ev|ery  
man|

If we | do sing | of woodes|, the woods| : be worth|y of | a con|sul  
Now is the last age come whereof : &c. Ecl. 4.

His versification is as wretched as his poetry.

This metre (more or less modified) was indeed generally used for the purposes of translation, during the sixteenth, and early part of the seventeenth century. In it Phaer translated the *Eneid*, Golding the *Metamorphoses*, and Chapman the *Iliad*.

Phaer sometimes transposes, as it were, his sections—giving three accents to the first, and four to the second: and occasionally leaves a verse unfinished. The following is his version of a well-known passage:

Anon through all the cities great : of Affrike Fame is gone,  
The blasing Fame, a mischief such : as swifter is there none ;  
By moving more she brede : and, as she ronnes, her might doth rise :  
By lowe for fear she lurkith first : then straight aloft in skyes ;  
With pride on ground she goth : and percith cloudes with head on  
hight.

Dame Erth her mother brooded furth : (men say) that child in spite  
Against the Gods, when Giances first : of serpent feeted line,  
Enceladus and Teus wrought : hie heaven to undermine.

Than for disdaine (for on themselves : their own worke Jove did fling)  
 Their sister crawlyd furth : both swift of feete and wight of wing,  
 A monster gastly great : for every plume her carcas bares,  
 Like number leering eyes she hath : like number harkning eares,  
 Like number tongues and mouths she waggges : a wondrous thing to  
 speke !

At midnight fourth she flies : and under shade her sound doth squeke.  
 All night she wakes, nor slomber sweete : doth take nor never slepes ;  
 By daies on houses tops she sittes : or gates of townes she kepes ;  
 On watching toures she clymes : and cities great she makes agast ;  
 Both truth and falshed furth she tells : and lies abrode doth cast.  
 She than the peoples mouthes about : with babling broad did fill,  
 And things onwrought, and wrought she told : and blew both good and  
 ill.

Golding, though he divides his verse at the eighth syllable, takes great liberties with the stops ; and occasionally uses the double rime. Ovid's description of Envy's house, in the second book, is thus rendered :

It standeth in a hollow dale : where neither light of sunne,  
 Nor blast of any winde or ayr : may for the depenesse come,  
 A dreyrie sad and doleful den : aye full of sloughfull colde,  
 As which, aye dimd with smoldring smoke : doth never fire beholde.  
 When Pallas, that same manly mayde : approached nere this plot,  
 She stayd without, for to the house : in enter might she not,  
 And with her javelin point did give : a push against the doore.  
 The doore fine open by and by : and fell me in the floore.  
 There saw she Envie sit within : fast gnawing on the flesh  
 Of snakes and todes, the filthy foode : that keepes her vices fresh.  
 It lothde her to beholde the sight : Anon the elf arose,  
 And left the gnawed adders flesh : and slouthfully she goes,  
 With lumpish leasure like a snayle : and when she saw the face  
 Of Pallas and her faire attyre : adornde with heavenly grace,  
 She gave a sigh, a sorie sigh : from bottom of her hart.  
 Her lippes were pale, her cheeks were wan : and all her face was  
 swart,  
 Her body lene as any rake : she looked eke askew ;  
 Her teeth were furde with filth and drosse : her gums were waryish  
 blew ;  
 The working of her festered gall had made her stomake green ;  
 And all bevenind was her tongue : No sleep her eyes had seene,  
 Continued cark and cancred care : did keepe her waking still.  
 Of laughter (save at others' harms) : the hel-bound can no skill ;  
 It is against her will that men : have any good successe ;  
 And if they have, she frets and fumes : within her minde no lesse  
 Than if herselfe had taken harme : In seeking to annoy,  
 And work distresse to other folke : herself she doth destroy.

Chapman, like Phaer, sometimes gives only three accents to his first section; and, like Golding, takes great liberties in the arrangement of his stops. He also allows his rhythm a more varied flow than either of his predecessors; occasionally bringing two accents together, or beginning his second section with the *tenth* syllable.

Then | from the sta|ble their | bright horse|: Autom|edon | with-  
drawes|  
And Al|cymus; | put poi|trils on|: and cast | upon | their jaws|  
Their brid|les, hur|ling back | the raine|: and hung | them on | the  
seate|.   
The faire | scourge then | Autom|edon|: takes up, | and up | doth  
get|  
To guide | the horse|. The fights | seate last|: Achil|les took |  
behind|,  
Who lookt | so arm'd | as if | the sunne|: there falne | from heaves  
had shin'd|;  
And ter|ribly | thus charg'd | his steeds|: "Xan|thus and Ba|lius .  
Seed | of the Har|pye, in | the charge|: ye un|dertake | of us|,  
Discharge | it not | as when|: Patro|clus ye | left dead | in field|,  
But when | with bloud|, for this | dayes fast|: observ'd, | Revenge  
shall yield|  
Our hearts | satie|ty, bring | us off|" : Thus since | Achil|les spake .  
As if | his aw'd | steeds un|derstood|: 'twas Ju|noes will | to make  
Vo|cal the pal|lat of | the one|: who shak|ing his | faire head|,  
Which | in his mane|, let fall | to earth|: he al|most bur|ied|,  
Thus Xan|thus spake|, "Ab|leest Achil|les : now | at least | our care  
Shall bring| thee off, | but not | farre hence|: the fa|tal min|utes are  
Of thy | grave ru|ine. Nor | shall we|: be then | to be | reprov'd .  
But might|iest Fate|, and | the great God|: Nor was | thy best | be-  
lov'd|

Lol|lai lol|lai<sup>2</sup> lit|il child|<sup>3</sup>: whi wep|istou | so sor|e .  
Ned|is mos|ton wep|e : hit was | izark|ed the zor|e .  
Eu|er to lib | in sor|ow : and sich | and mourn|e eu|ere .  
As | thin el|dren did | er this|: whil | hi aliv|es wer|e .  
Lol|lai<sup>4</sup> lit|il child|: child | lolai | lullow| .  
In | to un|cuth world|: icom|men so | ertow| .

Bes|tis and | thos foul|es : the fis|ses in | the flod|e  
And | euch schef | alin|es : imak|ed of bon|e and blod|e .  
Whan | hi com|ith to | the world|: hi doth | ham silf|sam god e .  
Al bot the wrech brol : that is | of ad|am is blod|e .

<sup>1</sup> This word is to be read, *sp'rits*. See p. 60.

<sup>2</sup> In the MS. we have merely the initial *l*.

Spoil'd | so of armes | by our | slow pace | : or cour | ages | impaire, |  
 The best | of Gods |, Lato | nas sone | : that weares | the gold | en haire |,  
 Gave | him his deathes | wound, though | the grace | : he gave | to  
 Hec | tor's hand |.

We | like the spir | it of | the West | : that all | spirits<sup>1</sup> can | com-  
 mand |

For powre | of wing |, could runne | him off | : but thou | thyself | must  
 go |

So Fate | ordains |, God | and a man | : must give | thee o | ver-  
 throw |.

*Chapman, tr. of Homer's Iliad, bk. 19.*

It will be seen, that these later metres—even those which depart most widely from their original—all agree in retaining the seven accents and fourteen syllables of the Catalectic Iambic Tetrameter.

That others of the longer rhythmi were imitated by our English poets, cannot, I think, admit of much doubt. In the Harl. MS. 913, there is the fragment of a Latin song, written in the rhythmus so often used by Walter Mapes :

Lol | la Lol | la par | vul | e : cur | fles tam | amare ?  
 Op | ortet | te plan | gere | ! : nec | non sus | pira | re !  
 Te | dole | re grav | iter | ! : de | cet veg | eta | re,  
 Ut | paren | tes ex | ules | : vex | erant | igna | re .  
 Lol | la Lol | la par | vule | : na | tus mun | do trist | i .  
 I | grotum | cum max | imo | : dol | ore | venis | ti .

and elsewhere, in the same MS. we have the following English version. It was probably written before the year 1300.

Lollai lollai little child, why weepest thou so sorely ?  
 Needs must thou weep—'twas fated thee of yore  
 Ever to live in sorrow, and sigh and ever mourn,  
 As thy fore-elders did ere this, while they were alive.  
 Lollai, little child, child, lollai, lullow,  
 Into a strange world now art thou y-come !

The beasts and the fowls, the fishes in the flood,  
 And each thing alive, y-made of bone and blood,  
 When they come into the world, they do themselves some good,  
 All but the wretched creature, that is of Adam's blood.

<sup>1</sup> The middle pause is always marked.

<sup>2</sup> Here the word *lollai* ought certainly to have been repeated.

Lol | lai lol | lai lit | il child : to kar | ertou | be met | te .  
 Thou nost | noȝt this world | is wild : bi for | the is | iset | te .

Child | if | be tid | eth : that thou | ssalt thriu | e and the | .  
 Thench | thou wer | ifos | tred : up | thi mo | der kne | .  
 Eu | er hab | mund in | thi hert | : of | thos thing | es thre | .  
 Whan | <sup>1</sup> thou com | mist, whar | thou art | , : and what | ssal com | of  
 the | .

Lol | lai lol | lai lit | il child : child | lollai | lollai | .  
 With sor | ow thou | com in | to this world : with sor | ow ssalt wend  
 awai | &c.

It is fair to conclude, that these tumbling verses were intended as a free imitation of the Latin rhythmus.

In the same MS. is another song, which might be called *the Child of Earth*. After each stave follows a Latin version, in the same kind of rhythm, as the Latin stave last quoted, and which rhythm I presume the English

Erth | gette on erth : ger | som and gold |  
 Erth | is the mo | der : in erth | is the mold |  
 Erth | uppon erth : be | thi soul | e hold |  
 Er erth | e go | to erth | e : bild | the long bold |  
 Erth | bild cas | tles : and erth | bilt tour | es  
 Whan erth | is on erth | e : blak | beth the bour | es.

In the sixteenth century, was used another kind of /long metre, containing sixteen syllables and eight accents. A specimen of it was given in bk. ii. c. 7.<sup>2</sup> Whether it originated in the rhythmus of the *full* Iambic tetrameter,<sup>3</sup> or was formed from some of the tumbling psalm-metres, by introducing that precision of rhythm, which characterised the period, I do not pretend to determine. In our hymn-books, its verse is divided, and it is called "the long metre," to distinguish it from the "common metre," of which we have spoken, and the "short metre," of which we shall have to speak shortly.

The Alexandrine, or verse of six accents, is of very common occurrence in the tumbling metres, which came into fashion during the thirteenth century; and possibly some of them may have been intended as loose imitations

<sup>1</sup> Should not this be *whane*?

Lollai, lollai, little child, to care art thou consigned ;  
Thou wotst not this world is a wild one, that is before thee set.

Child if thee betideth, that thou shalt thrive and prosper,  
Think how thou wert y-fostred upon thy mother's knee.  
Ever have thought, in thy heart, of these things three,  
Whence thou comest, where thou art, and what shall come of thee.  
Lollai, lollai, little child, child, lollai, lollai,  
With sorrow thou camest into this world, with sorrow shalt wend away,  
&c.

verses were meant to imitate. This song appears at one time to have been popular, for detached staves are found in different MSS. and a corrupt copy of one of them was discovered by Sir W. Scott, on a tombstone at Melrose. A single stave will show the character both of the rhythm and of the sentiment.

Earth gets it on earth, treasure and gold ;  
Earth is thy mother, in earth is thine earth-bed !  
Earth, while on earth, be to thy soul faithful—  
Ere earth go to earth, build thy lasting dwelling ;  
Earth buildeth castles, and earth buildeth tow'rs ;  
When earth is in earth, black are its mansions !

of the Alexandrine metre. We have however few specimens of this metre, with anything like a correct versification, before the sixteenth century.

The classical metre, which gave rise to the Alexandrine, is by no means an obvious one. That it was *not* the Iambic Trimeter (which has been suggested by some critics) is clear from the position of the pause. The trimeter, moreover, had its own peculiar rhythmus, which differed widely from the Alexandrine, as may be seen in the song of the Modonese Sentinel, written in the year 924.

O tu | qui ser|vas : ar|mis is|ta mæ|nia |  
Noli | dormi|re : mon|eo | sed vig|ila |  
Dum Hec|tor vi|gil : ex|titit | in Tro|ia |  
Non e|am ce|pit : fraud|ulen|ta Græ|cia |. &c.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 274.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 474.



Compare also :

Rosa jocunda : castitatis lilium,  
Prole fecunda : gignis dei filium,  
Virgoque munda : tu post puerperium.

*MS. Arundel 248, fol. 153b.*

See also the Romance version ; *ibid.*

The Asclepiad seems to have a better claim. This verse is found among the church-hymns, in various combinations. Sometimes we have three Asclepiads followed by the Glyconic—a combination much favoured by Horace; and sometimes we have a stave formed by joining four Asclepiads together. Both these “metra” had their corresponding “rhythmi.”<sup>1</sup> The hymn on the Sacrament, generally ascribed to Thomas Aquinas, may serve as an example of the first kind.

Dedit fragilibus : corporis ferculum,  
Dedit et tristibus : sanguinis poculum,  
Dicens accipite : quod trado vasculum,  
Omnes ex eo bibite, &c.

A specimen of the other rhythmus is furnished us by the *Apocalypsis Golixæ*, supposed to have been written by Walter Mapes, in the latter half of the twelfth century. A short extract, from one of Prudentius’ hymns, may perhaps show more clearly its connexion with its “metrum.”

Inventor rutili, dux bone, luminis,  
Qui certis vicibus tempora dividis,  
Merso sole Chaos ingruit horridum,  
Lumen redde tuis, Christe, fidelibus ! &c.

There will, I think, be little difficulty in considering this

<sup>1</sup> As the subject of these “rhythmi” is a curious one, it may be worth while observing, that the lines which Alcuin wrote on the Canons of Eusebius, furnish us with another species of the longer rhythmus. By dividing each line into two verses, and adding a pause after the fourth syllable of each verse, we get what appears to be the rhythmus of the Catalectic Trochaic Trimeter.

Quam | impri | mis : spe | cio | sa quad | riga |  
Ho | mo le | o : vit | ulus | et aq | uila |  
Quad | ragin | ta : u | num per | capit | ula |  
Col | loquun | tur : de | domin | o pa | ria | &c.

By attending to this simple law, we may easily restore the true reading in many places, where it has been corrupted; for the lines are very incorrectly printed.

stave as the classical metre, on which our English satirist has modelled his accentual verses. It need hardly be observed, that they are perfect Alexandrines.

Deca|nus ca|nis est| : qui se|quens præ|via|  
 Nare|cupid|inis| : luci|vestig|ia|,  
 Indu|cit cal|lide| : cleri|marsu|pia|,  
 Qua pri|us fix|erat| : magis|tri re|tia|.  
 Spondet|auxil|ium| : si quid|contul|eris|,  
 Sed cum|chirag|ricæ| : ferven|tem un|xeris|  
 Palmæ|prurig|inem| : unguen|to mun|eris|,  
 Ibit|podag|rice| : ad o|pem op|eris|. &c.

There is little doubt that the rhythm, into which these verses seem, at last, to have settled, was mainly owing to the final rime. Whatever cadence may have been given to the *earlier* rhythmus, it is clear that, as soon as its verse took the final rime, the last syllable must have been accented. The twelfth and sixth would then be the two syllables on which the whole verse rested; and the simplest rhythm, that could secure them their accents, would be the one adopted—that is, the rhythm of the Alexandrine.

The metrum, which may best dispute with the Asclepiad the honour of giving rise to the Alexandrine rhythmus, is the Trochaic Dimeter wanting half a metre. This metrum seems to have been well known during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The following rhythmus was certainly modelled upon it.

*The Annunciation.*

1.

Ave|Maris|stella|  
 Dei|mater|alma|  
 Atque|semper|virgo|  
 Felix|cæli|porta|.

2.

Sumens|illud|ave|  
 Gabri|elis|ore|  
 Funda|nos in|pace|  
 Mutans|nomen|Eusæ|.

3.

Salve|vincla|reis|  
 Prófer|lumen|cæcis|  
 Mala|nostra|pelle|  
 Bona|cuncta|posce|, &c.

where we may observe that such is the influence of the final rime (see p. 517), as to throw all the accents of the rhythmus on the *short* syllables of the metrum.

The rhythmus just quoted seems to differ from that noticed in bk. iv. c. 8, only in the circumstance of its being divided into staves. Elfric's rhythmus might well have been written, as if each of the sections had been a distinct verse, for in the MS. they are all written continuously; and it is possible that this latter may have been modelled on the Trochaic metrum, and the Alexandrine rhythmus of Walter Mapes (see p. 516) based on the Asclepiad. But the Norman rhythmus of Humphrey de Than (see bk. iv. c. 8), which so closely agrees with Elfric's Latin rhythmus, has two sections in each verse, which certainly favours the notion of its being founded on the metrum of the Asclepiad. On the whole, I incline to think that the verse of six accents and twelve syllables, dividing after the sixth, represents the same metrum, whether it takes the middle or the final rime; and that its classical model was in both cases the Asclepiad.

The Alexandrine was probably first known to the French at the close of the twelfth century, when the French, or, rather we should say, the Norman tale was written (see p. 248), to which it owes its name. Originally, there is no doubt, it had six accents; but the modern French Alexandrine is a tumbling verse of twelve syllables, dividing at the sixth, and the number of accents may be six, five, or four. So loose are the laws of French accentuation, that the rhythm of their heroic poetry is left almost at the mercy of the reader. If he satisfy the *metre*, by accenting the sixth and twelfth syllables, he may change from the common to the triple measure, or, if he choose, may adopt some intermediate cadence. When this licence was first tolerated, I cannot say, but I suspect at a comparatively recent period.

A metre, formed of Alexandrines, was used by our countrymen, in their *Romance* poems,<sup>1</sup> at the beginning of the twelfth century; but it seems not to have gained a

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<sup>1</sup> It may be observed, that the Alexandrine of our Romance poems freely admitted a lengthening syllable in either section.

footing in *English* poetry, until a much later period. Brunne's translation of Langtoft's chronicle is the first specimen of English rhythm, which we can *positively* say was intended as an imitation of it; though it is probable that much of the tumbling rhythm, which prevailed during the thirteenth century, was influenced by, or even originated in this metre.

Robert of Brunne most certainly intended to follow the rhythm of Langtoft's Alexandrines. In the latter part of his translation, he generally *interweaves* a second rime in each couplet; and as the middle pause is thus marked out, without possibility of mistake, I have taken the following specimen, from that portion of his work. He thus laughs at the easy and the simple Baliol:

Priu | e prid | e in pes |<sup>1</sup> : es net | tille in | herbere |  
 The ros | e is | myghtles | : ther net | tille spredis | ouer fer |  
 The Bal | iol | so ferd | : with | the duz | e pers |  
 His ream | e, as | 3e herd | : he lost | thorgh con | seilers |  
 First | he was | a kyng | : now is | he soud | ioure |  
 And is | at oth | er spend | yng : bon | den in | the toure | .

*Rob. of Brunne, tr. of Langtoft, ed. Hearne, p. 280.*

Privy pride in peace is like nettle in the arbour,  
 The rose is without pow'r where nettle spreads o'er far.  
 The Baliol so fared with the *douze peers*—<sup>2</sup>  
 His realm, as ye have heard, he lost through his counsellors .  
 First, was he a king, now is he mercenary !  
 And is, at other's cost, fetter'd in the Tow'r !

The metre was used, with a much narrower rhythm, by the poets of the sixteenth century—the verse being restricted not only to a given number of accents, but also to a certain number of syllables. It is truly wonderful the noble use which Drayton has made of a metre, so tied and fettered, as barely to escape the charge of monotony. What a picture of the woodland is contained in the following passage ! Shakespeare himself, though (like Drayton) born on the skirts of Arden, and though his fancy never revelled

<sup>1</sup> Qu. *pres.*

<sup>2</sup> That is—the *high aristocracy*; the romances, on the subject of Charlemagne, spread the phrase over Europe.

with more delight than amid the green leaves of the forest, could hardly have surpassed it.

With solitude what sorts : that here's not wondrous rife,  
Whereas the hermit leads : a sweet retired life  
From villages replete : with ragg'd and sweating clowns,  
And from the loathsome airs : of smoky-citied towns ?  
Suppose twixt noon and night : the sun his half way wrought,  
The shadows to be large : by his descending brought,  
Who with a fervent eye : looks through the twiring glades,  
And his dispersed rays : commixeth with the shades.  
Exhaling the milch-dew : which there had tarried long,  
And on the ranker grass : till past the noonsted hung ;  
When as the hermit comes : out of his homely cell,  
Where from all rude resort : he happily doth dwell ;  
Who in the strength of youth : a man at arms hath been,  
Or one, who of this world : the vileness having seen,  
Retires him from it quite : and with a constant mind  
Man's beastliness so loaths : that, flying human kind,  
The black and darksome nights : the bright and gladsome days  
Indifferent are to him : his hope on God that stays ;  
Each little village yields : his short and homely fare, &c.

*Polyolbion, song 13.*

In the same century, attempts were made to support this metre without the aid of final rime. Blennerhasset, a kind of grumbling half-pay officer, thus vents his spleen against the Clergy, in the *Mirror for Magistrates* :<sup>1</sup>

And this I there did finde : they of the cleargie be  
Of all the men that live : the leste in misery.  
For all men live in care : *they* carelesse do remaine ;  
Like buzzing drones they eate : the hony of the be,  
They only doo excel : for fine felicittee.  
The king must wage his warres : he hath no quiet day ;  
The nobleman must rule : with care the common weale ;  
The countryman must toyle : to tyll the barren soyle ;  
With care the marchant man : the surging seas must sayle ;  
With trickling droppes of sweat : the handcraftes man doth thrive :  
With hand as hard as bourde : the woorkeman eates his bread ;  
The souldiour in the fiede : with paine doth get his pay ;  
The serving man must serve : and crouch with cap and knee ;  
The lawier he must pleade : and trudge from bentsch to barre ;  
Who phisicke doth professe : he is not void of care !  
But Churchmen, *they* be blest : they turne a leaf or two,  
They sometime sing a psalme : and for the people pray ;

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<sup>1</sup> Vide his *Cadwallader*.

For which they honour have : and sit in highest place—  
What can they wishe or seek : that is not hard at hand ?

It will be seen, the writer affects alliteration, and never refuses either middle or final rime, if it readily presents itself.

There is a metre of six accents, used by Turberville and others his contemporaries, in which the accents are often *unequally* divided between the two sections. A specimen of it may be found in bk. ii. c. 7, p. 265.<sup>1</sup>

There was yet another kind of psalm-metre, which seems to have come into fashion soon after the year 1500. It consisted of the fourteen-syllabled verse of the "common metre," preceded by the Alexandrine. In our hymn-books, its verses are divided, and it is called the "short metre." The following lines of Surrey may furnish us with an example :

When sommer toke in hand : the winter to assail,  
With force of might and vertue great : his stormy blasts to quail,  
And when he clothed faire : the earth about with grene,  
And every tree new garmented : that pleasure was to sene,  
Mine hart gan new revive : and changed blood did stur,  
Me to withdraw my winter-woes : that kept within the dore.  
"Abrode," quod my desire : "assay to set thy fote,  
"Where thou shalt finde the savour sweet : for sprong is every rote.  
"And to thy health, if thou : were sick in any case,  
"Nothing more good, than in the spring : the aire to fele a space.  
"There shalt thou here and see : al kindes of birds y-wrought  
"Well tune their voice, with warble smal : as nature hath them  
tought," &c. [Tottell's Miscellany, ed. Arber, p. 7.]

The metre, thus written at length, is but rarely met with, except during the sixteenth century ; when it was commonly known by the name of *poulter's measure*, because the poulterer, as Gaskoyne tells us, "giveth twelve for one dozen, and fourteen for another."

<sup>1</sup> Compare the following :

Whenas | the Lord | : again | his Si|on had | forth brought |  
From bond | age great | : and al | so ser|vitude | extream |,  
His work | was such | : as did | surmount | man's heart | and thought |,  
So that | we were | : much like | to them | that use | to dream |.  
Our mo | uths were | : with laugh | ter fil | led then |,  
And eke | our tongues | : did shew | us joy | ful men |.

Cooté's *English Schoolmaster*, p. 46.

## CHAPTER VII.

## THE METRES OF FIVE ACCENTS

✓ seem to have been first used in English poems during the fourteenth century, though we have specimens of them in our Romance poetry, which were probably written before the close of the twelfth. The Troubadour had anticipated even this early date, and there is one poem in the Romance of Oc,<sup>1</sup> which Raynouard would fix even before the year 1000. In these older poems, the verse generally consists of ten syllables, with a pause after the fourth; but as the first section is often lengthened, the number of syllables is, in many verses, increased to eleven.

The mystery of the Foolish Virgins, which was written, during the twelfth century, partly in Latin, and partly in the Romance of Oc, contains the following staves. They seem to furnish us with the "rhythmus," which gave rise to this metre.

## FATUÆ.

Nos vir | gines | : que ad | vos ven | imus |  
 Negli | genter | : ole | um fun | dimus |  
 Ad vos | ora | re : soro | res, cu' | pimus |,  
 Ut in | illas | : quibus | nos cred | imus |.

## PRUDENTES.

Nos pre | cari | : preca | mur, am | plius |  
 Desin | ite | : soro | res o | tius |;  
 Vobis | enim | : nil e | rit me | lius |  
 Dare | preces | : pro hoc | ulter | ius |.

Compare the following :

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<sup>1</sup> Choix des Poesies des Troubadours.

Devou | ring fire | : shall go | before | his face |  
 A great | tempest | : shall round | about him trace | :  
 Then shall | he call | : the earth | and heav | ens bright |  
 To judge | his folk | : with eq | uity | and right |  
 Say | ing, go to | : and now | my saints | assemb | le  
 My pact | they keep | : their pact | do not | dissemb | le.

*Coote's English Schoolmaster*, p. 46.

It is by no means easy to connect this *rhythmus* with its *metrum*. Possibly, the *Alcaic* verse of eleven syllables<sup>1</sup> may have been the classical model. If the six syllables, furnished by the two dactyles, be read with three accents, like the latter section of the *Asclepiad*,<sup>2</sup> we shall have the cadence of those verses, which lengthen the first section.

Ad vos | ora | re : soro | res cu | pimus |.

As the last and important accent of the first section falls on the fourth syllable, the fifth *may* have been looked upon as a merely lengthening syllable, and gradually dropt from the verse, as unessential to the rhythm.

If it be said, such fifth syllable is of the same nature as that which is so often found lengthening the first section of the *Alexandrine*,<sup>3</sup> I would distinguish the cases thus. The *Alexandrine* lengthens *both* sections indifferently; while the verse of five accents never lengthens the second, but very frequently the first—the proportion being generally one verse in seven. Again, I do not remember any instance of either section being lengthened in the “*rhythmus*” of the *Alexandrine*; whereas we have just quoted a Latin verse of five accents, which lengthens the first section. I incline therefore to think, that the lengthening syllables of the *Alexandrine* are mere foreign additions, grafted on the “*rhythmus*,” and that the super-numerary syllable, in the verse of five accents, is, on the

<sup>1</sup> This verse was used by the later Latin poets, not only in *Alcaic* staves, but sometimes through entire poems.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 516.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 519, n. 1.



contrary, a remnant of its earlier and more perfect structure.

I have met with no specimen of this metre, among our English rhythms, before the fourteenth century. In the early half of this century lived Richard of Hampole, who, according to Lydgate, turned into English the *Prick of Conscience*,

Richard hermite, contemplative of sentence,  
Drough in Englishe the *Prick of Conscience*.

*Fall of Princes.*

Now we have two translations of the *Stimulus Conscientiæ*,—one in the metre of four accents, and another in a loose metre, which seems to have been meant for that of five accents. If this be Hampole's version, it is one of the oldest specimens of the metre now extant. As Richard died in 1348, and Chaucer did not write his great work till 1388, it may have preceded the *Canterbury Tales* by some forty or fifty years. The following description of the joy, that "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard," is taken from one of Warton's extracts. [See Warton, *History of English Poetry*, ed. Hazlitt, ii. 240.<sup>1</sup>]

The good|e soule | : schal hav|e in his | heryng|'e  
Gret joy|e in hev|ene : and grete | lykyng|'e  
For | hi schul|leth yher|e : the aung|eles song|,  
And with | hem hi schul|leth : synge ev|er among ,  
With de|lita|ble voys| : and swyth|'e cler|e ;  
And al|so with that| : hi schul|len hav|e ther|e  
All oth|er man|er : of ech | a mel|odye  
Off | wel lyk|yng noys|e : and men|stralsy|e,  
And | of al man|er ten|es : of | musik|e  
The whuch|e to man|nes her|te : mig|te lik|'e,  
Without|e en|i man|er : of | travayl|'e,  
The whuch|e schal nev|er : ces|se ne fayl|'e.  
And | so schil : <sup>2</sup> schal that noys|e bi | and so swet|'e  
And | so de|lita|ble : to smal|e and to gre|te,  
That al | the mel|ody|e : of this | worlde heer|  
That ev|er was | yhur|yd : <sup>3</sup> fer|re or neer|

<sup>1</sup> [But Warton must be mistaken. These lines are not by Hampole.<sup>2b</sup> used a verse of *four* accents; so that the *other* version is *his*. See Hampole's *Pricke of Conscience*, edited by Morris.—W. W. S.]

<sup>2</sup> *Schil*, loud, shrill.

<sup>3</sup> *Yhuryd*, y-heard.

Wer|e therto | : bot|e as sor|we and car|e,  
 To | the blis|se that is | : in hev|ene wel yare.<sup>1</sup>

Loose as is the rhythm of these verses, I have seen few *manuscripts* of the *Canterbury Tales*, which admit of a more definite scansion. The best copies indeed I have not seen; and I think it probable that Chaucer at least confined his metre to the verse of five accents; but any more particular definition I dare not venture upon. Before we can understand the nature of his versification—before we can render Chaucer that justice, which his genius so loudly calls for—we have to settle questions, that require for their solution the most searching and, at the same time, the most delicate investigations. Unfortunately the difficulties of the inquiry are doubled by the blunders of our MSS. Those who turn to them as authority, may feel half disposed to join in the humorous malediction, which the poet himself invokes upon Adam, his “scrivener.” At a time when our language was in a state of transition, and when, consequently, correct transcription was so necessary, the greater demand requiring a quicker supply of MSS. gave rise to the professional copyist—the needy and the ignorant scrivener. In him our literature found but a poor substitute for the educated monk; and Chaucer must be acquitted of all undue sensitiveness, notwithstanding his many allusions to the ignorance and carelessness of his transcribers. If Waller thought himself entitled to complain of our “ever-changing tongue,” what must such a man have felt, when he saw in how frail a bottom he had consigned name and fame to posterity!

That Chaucer was a *master* of English versification no one, that reads him with due care and attention, can well doubt. There are many passages in his works, which, from the agreement of MSS. and the absence of all those peculiarities of structure that leave matter for doubt, have, in all probability, come down to us as Chaucer wrote them—and

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<sup>1</sup> *Yare*, provided, ready. .

in *these* the versification is as exquisite as the poetry. It needs not the somewhat suspicious apology of Dryden.<sup>1</sup> I am not one of those who assert, that Chaucer has always "ten syllables in a verse, where we find but nine;" but I am as far from believing, that "he lived in the infancy of our poetry," because the scheme of his metre somewhat differs from our own. As far as we have the means of judging, it was not only "auribus istius temporis accommodata," but fulfilled every requisite that modern criticism has laid down, as either essential to the science, or conducive to the beauty of a versification.

The metre of five accents, with couplet-rime, may have got its earliest name of "riding rime" from the *mounted* pilgrims of the Canterbury Tales. It was long used for light and trifling subjects; and by the critics of the sixteenth century was very unfavourably contrasted with the stately ballet-stave. Gaskoyne, in the list of his metres, had almost "forgotten a notable kinde of rime, called ryding rime, and that is such as our Master and Father Chaucer used in his Canterbury Tales, and in divers other delectable and light enterprises, &c. As this ryding rime servith most aptly to write a merie tale, so rhythmme royall<sup>2</sup> is fittest for a grave discourse, &c." According to Puttenham, Chaucer's "metre heroicall of Troilus and Cressid is very grave and stately, keping up the staffe of seven, and the verse of ten; his other verses of the Canterbury Tales be *but riding rime*, &c." Harrison,<sup>4</sup> in like manner, draws an unfavourable comparison between his "riding rimes" and the favourite rhythm,

When as the vers is plac'd between the meeter,  
while King James<sup>5</sup> considers this metre fit only for

<sup>1</sup> Preface to the Fables.

<sup>2</sup> That is, the ballet-stave of eight verses, see b. iv. c. 5.

<sup>3</sup> The ballet-stave of seven, see b. iv. c. 5.

<sup>4</sup> Epigrams, 3. 44.

<sup>5</sup> See his Reulis and Cautelis.

"long histories," and would deny it even the name of "verse."

At the beginning of the seventeenth century, this metre seems to have gained somewhat more of dignity. According to Drummond of Hawthornden,<sup>1</sup> Jonson had the design of writing an epic poem in *couplets*, as "he detested all other rimes." It also appears, he wrote a discourse to prove "couplets the best sort of verses, especially when they are broke like Hexameters; and that cross rimes and stanzas, because the purpose would lead beyond eight lines, were all forced." But, in the next generation, Davenant wrote his *Gondibert* in the "interwoven stanza of four," or, as we now term it, the elegiac stave; and defended his choice of a metre in a laboured criticism.<sup>2</sup> He thinks his stave best adapted to "a plain and stately composing of musick;" and believes it to be more pleasant to the reader, to give him a "respite or pause between every stanza, than to run him out of breath with continued *couplets*." The influence of Davenant is traced in the early poems of Dryden; but this poet soon gave his preference to the metre, which, chiefly under his sanction, has now established itself as our "Heroic verse."

The unrimed metre of five accents, or as it is generally termed *blank verse*, we certainly owe to Surrey. English verse without rime was no novelty; and the "cadence" of Chaucer comes full as near to the blank verse of five accents, as the loose rhythms of some of our dramatists; but I have seen no specimen of any definite unrimed metre of five accents, which can date earlier than Surrey's translation of the fourth *Eneid*. His verse was certainly considered, at the time, as something new, for the second edition of his translation is entitled, "The fourth booke of Virgill, &c. translated into English, and drawn into a *straunge metre* by Henry, Earle of Surrey." As Surrey was well acquainted with Italy and its literature, and as the Italians were already making efforts to banish rime from their poetry, it is

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<sup>1</sup> See *Heads of a Conversation*, &c.

<sup>2</sup> See *Preface to the Gondibert*.

possible he may have taken the hint from them; but, in fact, the subject of unrimed verse had for some time fixed the attention of *scholars*, very generally, throughout Europe.

It is difficult to suppose, that such a work as Surrey's was unknown to Milton. Yet in his preface to the second edition of his *Paradise Lost*, he will have his "neglect of rime" to be "an example set, *the first in English*, of ancient liberty recovered to heroic poem." Perhaps he might refuse this lofty title to a mere translation; but, however this be, the only predecessors he will acknowledge, in breaking the "bondage of riming," are the English Tragedians, and "some Italian and Spanish poets of prime note." It will not be easy to acquit Milton, altogether, of injustice towards his countryman; but if he disdained to mention Surrey, he also disdained to copy from him—both the merits and the faults of Milton's versification are *his own*.

I have hitherto deferred any general inquiry into the laws by which these poets regulated their *rhythm*, as such inquiry, embracing alike the two great divisions—couplets and blank verse—seemed to render a previous acquaintance with the properties of both, in some degree necessary. All the early specimens of this metre, in our native language, exhibit a very loose copy of the rhythm, which is found in our romance poems. The number of syllables varies widely in different verses; and instead of the first section being confined to two accents, and four or five syllables, it often contains three of the former, and six, seven, or eight of the latter. I believe Chaucer strictly confined his verse to five accents; but his successors, and, if we may trust our MSS. even his contemporaries, sometimes tolerated a verse of four. In the MSS. indeed of the fifteenth century, we find a tumbling metre allotted even to Chaucer; but this may, I think, be owing to the change which had, in the meanwhile, taken place in our language. The poets who used this metre in the sixteenth century were, for the most part, very precise in their rhythm. There are still extant poems of Churchyard, Gaskoyne, and Surrey, in which the

verse has regularly ten syllables, and the pause almost invariably follows the fourth.

The general scheme of Milton's rhythm is clearly that of five accents and ten syllables to the verse; but as he never counted the lengthening syllable of the second section, and not always the lengthening syllable of the first, his verse has often eleven, and sometimes even twelve syllables. An abrupt section was furnished with a foot of three syllables—the first section *always*, the second in all cases but those, in which the first section had a lengthening syllable, which was counted in the verse. The pausing section 7 p. was sometimes admitted as the first section, and is sometimes found lengthened.

The rhythm of Pope and Dryden differed from Milton's in three particulars. It always counted the lengthening syllable of the first section; it admitted three syllables only in the *second* foot of the abrupt section; and it rejected the sectional pause.

The writers of our couplet-metre occasionally vary their rhythm by one or other of the following *licenses*. They sometimes rime their verses by triplets—a change of plan, which is pointed out to the reader by the vulgar expedient of a marginal bracket; sometimes they substitute an Alexandrine, or even a verse of seven accents,<sup>1</sup> in place of one of five; and sometimes they interpolate a broken verse, as in the following passage,—

An awful fear his ardent wish withstood,  
Nor durst disturb the goddess of the wood,  
For such she seem'd.<sup>2</sup>  
So checking his desire, with trembling heart,  
Gazing he stood, nor would nor could depart.

*Dryden, Cymon and Iphigenia.*

The triplet and the Alexandrine may be found in Hall, and were profusely used by Dryden; the other license seems to have originated in the broken rhythm, which came into fashion about the end of the sixteenth century. In regular

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 272, 273.

<sup>2</sup> [This line is usually printed in a *complete* form.—W. W. S.]

blank verse we meet neither with Alexandrine nor broken rhythm; but in our dramatists they are common.

The licenses, which are taken in blank verse, relate chiefly to the position of the stops and pauses. As they are usually defended by the example of Milton, it may be well to examine the principles on which this great Master regulated his versification; and I would hope to escape the charge of presumption, even though I venture, in *some* particulars, to question their soundness. With reverence should we approach the shade of Milton; but criticism would lose half its usefulness and all its dignity, if we yielded an unqualified assent to the doctrine, that its canons are nothing more than the practice of our great poets, reduced to rule.

"True musical delight," says Milton, "consists in apt numbers, fit quantities of syllables, and the sense variously drawn out from one verse into another."

By "apt numbers" I understand that accommodation of the sound to the sense, which Pope's hackneyed line has made familiar, as one of the rules of criticism. Perhaps no man ever paid the same attention to the quality of his rhythm as Milton. What other poets effect, as it were, by chance, Milton achieved by the aid of science and of art; he *studied* the aptness of his numbers, and diligently tutored an ear, which nature had gifted with the most delicate sensibility. In the flow of his rhythm, in the quality of his letter-sounds, in the disposition of his pauses, his verse almost ever *fits* the subject; and so insensibly does poetry blend with this—the last beauty of exquisite versification, that the reader may sometimes doubt whether it be the thought itself, or merely the happiness of its expression, which is the source of a gratification so deeply felt.

In recommending "fit quantities of syllables," I believe Milton wished to discourage any *strain* upon the natural rhythm of the language—he would have it adapted, and not wrested to the purposes of metre. Those, who are acquainted with the state of our poetry during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, will readily acknowledge the necessity of this rule; but they will be disappointed if they

look to Milton for its observance. Not only is the flow of his sentence made to yield to the necessities of his metre, but the verbal accent is often disregarded, and the same word variously accented, even within the compass of a few lines. His contemporaries took the same liberties, though not, I think, to the same extent. The fluctuations of our language may be urged in his excuse; but, when every allowance is made for the unsettled accentuation of that period, he must still lie, in many cases, open to the animadversions of criticism.

The last rule of Milton—or rather the manner in which he reduced it to practice—has had a great, and certainly not a favourable, influence upon English versification. I do not question the advantage which may sometimes be gained, from running the verses one into the other. But Milton's passion for variety too often endangers his metre. Not only do his pauses divide portions of the sentence, most intimately connected together, but frequently we have periods ending in the midst of a section, and sometimes immediately after the first, or before the last syllable of the verse. Severe as is the judgment of Johnson, it is not an unjust one, that such a mode of procuring variety "changes the measures of a poet to the periods of a declaimer." Few readers are to be met with, who can make the beginning or the ending of Milton's lines perceptible to their audience.

If it be said, that such sudden and abrupt termination of the sentence often suits the subject,<sup>1</sup> and is strikingly beautiful—the beauty will be acknowledged, but it is a beauty beyond the reach of Milton's metre, a beauty therefore, which he had no right to meddle with. Versification ceases to be a science, if its laws may be thus lightly broken.

It may perhaps be said, that Milton's metre is *sui generis*, and not to be judged by the ordinary rules of English versification. There are critics who consider these sectional stops as *pauses*, and sometimes assign three or even four of these pauses to a verse! as there are others who sometimes allow six accents to a verse; or thirteen, fourteen, or even

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<sup>1</sup> See the first example on p. 155.



fifteen syllables ! others again who consider a tribrach, or foot of three unaccented syllables, admissible ! and a fifth party, who look with scorn upon any accentual division of Milton's rhythm, and divide each verse into six cadences ! Some of these theories I have vainly tried to comprehend, and others I have found wholly inapplicable.

There are certainly few English poets whose versification has been so often imitated as Milton's, or so seldom imitated well. The workings of his genius, like those of nature, are complicated ; and to trace a particular *effect* to its causes, often requires the most delicate analysis. His faults lie on the surface, and may be copied by a schoolboy. They are forgotten, or at any rate forgiven, when accompanied with all the matchless graces of his versification ; but in the pages of an imitator we too often see only a mimicry of his deformities—Alexander's high shoulder on the back of his courtier.

Though the descent be somewhat startling, we ought not to close this chapter without noticing an attempt, made by Drummond of Hawthornden, to originate a new variety of the couplet-metre. Its novelty consisted in alternating the double with the single rime. The hint was, doubtless, borrowed from the French, who in the preceding century had established, as a law of their heroic verse, that the *feminine* rime should always alternate with the *masculine*.

It was the time, when to our northern pole  
The brightest lamp of heav'n begins to roll,  
When earth more wanton in new robes appeareth ;  
And scorning skies, her flow'rs in rainbows beareth,  
On which the air moist diamonds doth bequeath,  
Which quake to feel the kissing Zephyr's breath ;  
When birds from shady groves their love forth warble,  
And sea-like heaven looks like smoothest marble, &c.

*Drummond's Sonnets ; pt. i. song 13.*

The reader will hardly wish for a longer extract.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## THE TUMBLING-METRES.

KING JAMES in his "Reulis and Cautelis" gives us the following definition of tumbling verse. "Ye man observe that thir tumbling verse flowis not on that fassoun, as the otheris dois. For all utheris keipis the reule, quilk I gave before, to wit, the first fute short, the second lang and so furth. Quhairas thir hes twa short and one lang through all the lyne quhen they keip ordour; albeit the maist part of thame be out of ordour, and keipis na kynde nor reule of flowing, and for that cause are callit *tumbling verse*." He applies the name, specially, to a stave, which he recommends for "flyting," or invective; but it may be used with much convenience, in all cases, where the rhythm falls within the definition just quoted. I shall, however, in the present chapter, apply it more particularly to those verses which enter into foreign and artificial combinations, [while] at the same time they retain that irregularity of flow, which our native rhythms were supposed to sanction.

We have already seen, at how early a period the tumbling verse intruded into our psalm-metres, and have noticed some of the causes which may have led to this result.<sup>1</sup> Another kind of tumbling-metre was founded on the verse of five accents. It prevailed chiefly during the fifteenth century; and seems to have originated in the unsettled state of our language at that period. While some writers wholly omitted the *e* final, and others more or less generally pronounced it, we may readily understand how soon the rhythm of any poet (Chaucer for example) must have become matter of doubt and speculation; and how easily

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<sup>1</sup> See pp. 507, 509.

the most careful versification might be degraded into a loose and slovenly specimen of the tumbling-metre. When once this kind of rhythm was looked upon as sanctioned, its facility would be quite sufficient to account for its popularity.

Lidgate has left us one of the earliest specimens of this metre in the adventures of his "London Lickpenny,"<sup>1</sup>—a gentleman who indulges the hope of extracting law from an unfeed lawyer! After a vain attempt on the King's Bench, he tries the Common Pleas and the Rolls

Un|to the Com|mon Place : I | yode tho|,  
Where sat | one with| : a syl|ken hoode|,  
I dyd | him rev|erence : for | I ought | to do so|,  
And told | my case| : as well | as I coode|,  
How | my goodes | were defrau|ded me : by | falshood|;  
I gat | not a mum| : of his mouth | for my mede|,  
And | for lack | of mon|y : I myght | not spede|.

Un|to the Rolls| : I gat | me from thence|  
Before | the clarkes| : of the Chaun|cerye|,  
Where man|y I found| : earn|yng of pence|,  
But none | at all| : once regard|ed mee|;  
I gave | them my playnt| : uppon | my knee|;  
They lyk|ed it well| : when they | had it reade|,  
But lack|yng mon|y : I could | not be sped|.

Within | this Hall| : ne|ther rich | nor yett poore|  
Wold do | for me ought| : although | I shold dye|,  
Which se|ing, I gat | me : out | of the doore|,  
Where Flem|ynges began| : on me | for to cry|,  
"Mas|ter what| : will you cop|en or by|?  
"Fine | felt hattes| : or spec|tacles | to rede|,  
"Lay | down your syl|ver : and here | you may speede|.

Then | to West|mynster gate| : I pres|ently went|,  
When | the sonn| : was | at hyghe pryme|,  
Cooke | to me| : they tooke | good entente|  
And prof|erred me bread| : with ale | and wyne|,  
Rybbs | of befe | : both fat | and ful fyne|;  
A fay|re cloth| : they gan | for to sprede|,  
But wan|tyng mon|y : I myght | not then speede| &c.

<sup>1</sup> Harl. 367. It is also found in Strutt's *Manners and Customs*, &c., vol. iii. [I have carefully corrected the text by MS. Harl. 367, of which an accurate copy is given in my *Specimens of English* from 1394-1579; p. 24 *Lickpenny*, i.e. catch-money, is an epithet of London itself.—W. W. S.]

This was the favourite metre of the contributors to the *Mirror for Magistrates*. Their *rhythm*, however, varies greatly. In some places it approaches the common, in others the triple measure; and generally inclines to the latter, when the subject (as in the passage just quoted) relates to ordinary life, or admits of familiar application.

There is another kind of tumbling verse, which is founded on the metre of four accents. At what time the tumbling and the regular metres were first distinguished, is by no means easy to say, as the origin of the latter is involved in much obscurity; but, in the fifteenth century, the two were certainly looked upon as distinct and separate metres. The tumbling verses have generally four accents, and a very loose rhythm; but they sometimes take three or five accents, and the rhythm shifts, accordingly, to the triple or to the common measure.

The use which Spenser made of this metre, in some of his *Eclogues*, seems to me a happy one; and to impart a feeling of country freshness and of yeomanly sincerity, which is singularly pleasing. I would instance the beautiful fable in the February-eclogue [ll. 102, &c.].

There grew | an ag|ed : Trée | on the gréene|,  
 A good|ly Oake|: sometime | had it béene|,  
 With armes | ful strong|: and large|lie displayde|,  
 But | of their leaues|: they were dis|araide|.  
 The bod|ie bigge|: and might|ilie pight|,  
 Through|lie root|ed : and | of won|derous hight|;  
 Whil|ome had bene|: the king | of the field|,  
 And moch|el mast|: to the hus|band did yield|  
 And with | his nuts lar|ded : man|ie swine|;  
 But now | the graie | mosse : mar|red his rine|,  
 His bar|ed boughes|: were beat|en with stormes|,  
 His top | was bald|: and was|ted with wormes|,  
 His hon|or decai|ed : his braunch|es sere|.

Hard | by his side|: grew a brag|ging brere|, &c.

Again, when the “proud weed” had worked upon the passions of his too credulous master, how happily flow the verses, which describe the “waste oak’s” overthrow!

The Ax|es edge|: did oft | turne againe|,  
 As half | unwil|ling : to cut | the graine|;

Séem | ed, the sense | lesse : yr | on did feare |,  
 Or | to wrong ho | ly : eld | did forbear |;  
 For it | had bene | : an aun | cient trée |,  
 Sa | cred with man | y : a mis | terée |,  
 And of | ten crost | : with | the priests crewe |,  
 And of | ten hal | lowed : with ho | ly-wa | ter dew |!  
 But sike | fancies wer | en : fool | erie |,  
 And brough | ten this Oake | : to this mis | erie |, &c.

The distinction between this metre, and that of Christabel is slight indeed. Yet, in his preface, Coleridge will not have his metre to be "properly speaking irregular, though it may seem so from its being founded on a *new principle*; namely, that of counting in each line the accents, not the syllables. Though the latter may vary from seven to twelve, yet in each line the accents will be found to be only four." No one will suppose that Coleridge claimed any thing but what he *believed* to be his due. He merely laboured under a delusion, of which all of us must, at some time or other, have been conscious, and mistook the gradual awakenings of memory for the slow and tedious process of invention.

Perhaps the same excuse may be made for Byron. He has somewhere stated, that he wrote the Siege of Corinth before he knew anything of the Christabel. Yet so many are the analogies between the two poems, so similar are the ends proposed, and the means taken to effect them, so nearly identical are the metres, and even some of the images, that no critic but must feel doubts as to the correctness of this statement. The difficulty, however, may admit of another solution. Byron may have had his genius turned in this particular channel by the perusal of the Christabel; and, afterwards, when his mind had been diverted to other subjects, and his memory distracted by his multifarious and desultory reading, he may have confounded a *second* perusal with the first. Those who have often had occasion to test the accuracy of memory, will remember cases, in which it has proved equally treacherous.

The origin of such English metres as belong to the *triple measure*, is no less a subject of difficulty than of

interest. King James,<sup>1</sup> it appears, considered them as mere varieties of the tumbling verse; and there are early specimens of these tumbling metres, which approach the triple measure so nearly, as to render the transition from the one to the other at least probable. I have seen no English poem written throughout in the triple measure which could date earlier than the fifteenth century. The following song is mentioned by Gawin Douglas, in the year 1512, as then popular among the vulgar.<sup>2</sup> It was probably written in the latter half of the fifteenth century, but has been referred to an earlier period.

## 1.

Hay! now | the day daw | is,  
 The jol | ie cok craw | is,  
 Now shroud | is the shau | is  
 Throw na | ture anone | ;  
 The thriss | el cok cry | is  
 On lov | ers wha ly | is,  
 Now skail | is the sky | is,  
 The night | is neir gone | .

## 2.

The fields | ourflow | is<sup>3</sup>  
 With gou | ans that grou | is,  
 Quhair lil | ies lyk lou | is  
 Als rid | as the rone |  
 The tur | till that treu | is  
 With nots | that reneu | is  
 Hir hair | tie perseu | is,  
 The night | is neir gone | . &c. &c.

At the beginning of the sixteenth century the triple measure must have been familiar to the ears of the people, or Tusser,<sup>4</sup> who wrote for the yeomanry, would not have selected it, as the chief medium for conveying to them his husbandly lessons. He uses it in various combinations;

<sup>1</sup> See p. 533.

<sup>2</sup> [See Sibbald, Scot. Poetry, iv., p. lx.]

<sup>3</sup> This word was probably pronounced with four syllables *ow-er-flow* | is, though here spelt with three.

<sup>4</sup> [See the edition of Tusser's Husbandry, by Payne and Herrtage, published in 1878 for the English Dialect Society.—W. W. S.]

sometimes in a short stanza, with alternate rime [section 62],

Ill hus | bandry brag | geth  
To go | with the best |,  
Good hus | bandry bag | geth  
Up gold | in his chest |.

Ill hus | bandry los | eth  
For lacke | of good fence |,  
Good hus | bandry clos | eth  
And gain | eth the pence |. &c.

sometimes in a longer stanza [section 5], each line containing three accents,

What lookest thou herein to have?  
Fine verses thy fancy to please?  
Of man | y my bet | ters *that* crave |;  
Look noth | ing but rude | ness in these |.

What look | ye, I pray | you shew what |?  
Terms pain | ted with rhet | oric fine |?  
Good hus | bandry seek | eth not that |,  
Nor is't | any mean | ing of mine |.

What look | est thou, speak | at the last |?  
Good les | sons for thee | and thy wife |?  
Then keep | them in mem | ory fast |,  
To help | as a com | fort to life |.

He has also [in sect. 68] used the stave, of which a specimen was given in p. 537; but the great staple of his work is a stave composed of two riming couplets.

To Hun | ters and Hawk | ers : take heed | what ye say |,  
Mild an | swer with cour | tesy : drives | them away |;  
So where | a man's bet | ter : *will* o | pen a gap |,  
Resist | not with rude | ness, for fear | of mishap |.

A man | in this world | : for a churl | that is known |,  
Shall hard | ly in qui | et : keep that | is his own |;  
Where low | ly, and such | : as of cour | tesy smells |,  
Finds fa | vour and friend | ship : wherev | er he dwells |.

[Section 10, stanzas 49, 50.]

The second of these specimens, it will be seen, is the stave used by Rowe,

Despairing beside a clear stream  
A shepherd forsaken was laid, &c.

and which was afterwards adopted by Shenstone in his *Pastorals*.<sup>1</sup>

During the last two centuries we have had almost every kind of stave written in this measure. It must be useless to quote examples.

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<sup>1</sup> [See *Colin's Complaint, A Song*; by N. Rowe.—W. W. S.]



## CHAPTER IX.

## LOOSE RHYTHMS.

MEASURED prose seems to have been known to our language from the earliest period. Even in the simple narrative of our venerable Chronical, we often find traces of a rhythmical structure, much too marked to be the result of

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—Ne wearth Angel-cynne nan wærsa dæd gedon thonne theos wæs . syththon hi ærest. Bryton-land gesohton. Men hin|e of-myr|throdon . ac God | hine mæ|sode . he | wæs on lif|e eorþ|lic cing|. he | is nu | æfter death|e heof|onlic sanct|. Hin|e nol|don his eorþ|lican mag|as wrec|an . ac hin|e haf|ath his heof|onlic a fæ|der swith|e gewrec|en. Tha eorþ|lican ban|an woldon his | gemynd | on eorþ|an adilgian . ac | se up|lica wrec|end haf|ath his | gemynd | on heof|enum and | on eorþ|an tobræd|. Forþam<sup>1</sup> tha | the nol|don ær | to his lib|endum lich|aman | onbug|an tha nu ead|modlic|e on cneow|um abug|ath to | his dæd|um ban|um. Nu we magon ongytan . thæt manna wisdom . and [heora] smeagunga . and heore rædas . syndon nahtlice ongeon Gades getheah.

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Coleridge<sup>4</sup> characterises the style of Junius as “a sort of metre, the law of which is a balance of thesis and antithesis.” If we might use the word metre, in the sense here given to it—as a measure of *thought*—we could hardly find a more happy definition of the passage just quoted. The rhy-

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<sup>1</sup> See p. 440. A yet earlier specimen of this riming prose (if we may so call it) may be found in the passage of the Chronicle, which describes the cruelties practised on the young Etheling Alfred, A.D. 1036.

<sup>2</sup> As the inaccurate Worcester copy, Tib. B. iv., is the only one, within reach, that contains the passage, I have taken the extract in the text from Dr. Ingram's Edition. [The extract is now from the Laud MS. 636; see Prof. Earle's edition, p. 129, which affords one or two trifling corrections.—W. W. S.]

<sup>3</sup> This word is omitted in some of the MS. and seems to be superfluous. [It does not appear at all in Earle's edition.]

accident. Many of the writers certainly paid attention to the flow of their sentences, and when their thoughts kindled with a subject of stirring interest, they naturally clothed them in the rhythm, to which poetry had given high and dignified associations.

We have seen Wulfstan<sup>1</sup> employing final rime, to strengthen his rhythm, and thereby throw his figures into more marked relief. At an earlier period, alliteration was called in aid; and sometimes we find all the conditions of an alliterative couplet completely satisfied. The following passage is taken from the Chronicle, under the date 979. It contains the reflections of the writer on the murder of the martyred Edward.<sup>2</sup>

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—Nor was there any worse deed done by the Engle-kin (than this was) sithen they first sought the land of Britain. Men murder'd him; but God exalted him! he was in life an earthly king; he is now after death a heavenly saint! Him would not his earthly kinsmen avenge; but him hath his heavenly Father strongly avenged! His earthly murderers would on earth have destroyed his memory; but his Avenger on high hath spread his memory over heaven and over earth! They, that would not erst to his living body bend them, these now humbly on their knees bow to his dead bones! Now may we learn, that men's wisdom, and their machinations, and their counsels, are naught against God's will.

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mical portion contains no less than five "antithetic parallels," (to use the language of Bishop Lowth), and every point of contrast is enforced and pressed upon the reader's notice by the rhythm. This balance of thesis and antithesis is often met with in our epitaphs,<sup>3</sup> but we seldom find that attention

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<sup>1</sup> Table Talk, ii. 213.

<sup>2</sup> Compare Dodaley's Epitaph on Queen Caroline:

"Here lie the remains of Caroline,  
Queen consort of Great Britain.

Whose virtues

Her friends, when living, knew and enjoyed,  
Now dead, her foes confess and admire;" &c.

paid to the flow of the sentence, which is necessary to give it its full effect.

The word *prose* seems to have been formerly used with great laxity of meaning. In our missals we find it applied to the Hexameters, and to the longer rhythms, which we have called the Psalm-metres; and when Jonson<sup>1</sup> denounced the verse of seven accents as "prose," he was merely giving it a title, which it had borne for centuries. *Cadence* seems to have been the term used to denote the kind of measured prose, of which we are now speaking; and if, in any composition, much attention was paid to the flow of the rhythm, it was said (at least in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries) to be "prosed in faire cadence."

In the House of Fame [b. ii. l. 112], Chaucer represents himself as thus addressed,

Thou —— has set thy wit,  
(Although in thy hede ful lyte is)  
To maken bookes, songes, and dities  
In ryme, or elles in cadence,  
As thou best canst, in reverence  
Of love—

and Tyrwhitt conjectured, with his usual sagacity, that he had written in a "species of poetical composition, distinct from riming verses."<sup>2</sup> The Tale of Melibeus has been considered, by some persons, as "blank verse;" but though its claim to such a title may be questioned, it is certainly a specimen of cadence. The model, which Chaucer had floating before him, was clearly his favourite metre of five accents; and it must be confessed, there is but little difference between this measured prose and the loose rhythm, wavering between prose and metre, in which so many of our dramatists have written. The following extract I have endeavoured to arrange according to its metrical structure. It is taken from Tyrwhitt's Edition,

<sup>1</sup> See "Heads of Conversations," &c. by Drummond of Hawthornden.

<sup>2</sup> "Amonges alle clerkys we bere the prysee  
Of gramer, *cadens*, and of prosodye."

*Cowenry Mysteries*, 189.

and is probably not very correctly written; but, as each line is scanned, the reader will see in what cases the final *e* is supposed to be pronounced, and in what cases superfluous; while at the same time he is furnished with the means of forming an independent judgment.

A yonge | man cal|led : Mel|ibe|us  
 Migh|ty and rich|e : begate | upon | his wif|  
 That cal|led was | Pruden|ce  
 A dough|ter which| : that cal|led was | Sophi|e.

Upon | a day | befell|,  
 That he | for his | disport| : is went | into|  
 The fel|des him | to play|e : his wif| and eke|  
 His dough|ter hath | he laft| : within | his hous|  
 Of which | the dor|es : wer|en fast | yshet|te.  
 Foure | of his ol|de foos| : han it | espi|ed  
 And set|ten lad|ders : to | the wal|les  
 Of | his hous| : and | by the win|dowes  
 Ben en|tred, and bet|en his wif| : and wound|ed his dough|ter  
 With | five mor|tal woun|des : in | five son|dry pla|ces ;<sup>1</sup>

This | is to say|,  
 In | here feet, in | here hond|es : in | hire er|es  
 In | here nose| : and in | here mouth |  
 And lef|ten hire | for dede| : and wen|ten away|

Whan Mel|ibe|us  
 Retor|ned was| : in | to his hous | and sey|  
 Al this | meschief| : he | like a mad|man,  
 Ren|ding his cloth|es : gan | to wep|e and cri|e.  
 Pruden|ce his wif| : as fer | forth as | she dors|te  
 Besought | him of | his we|ping : for | to stint<sup>2</sup>  
 But not | forthy| : he gan | to cri|e and wep|en  
 Ev|er leng|er the mo|re.

This no|ble wif|, Pruden|ce : remem|bred hire|  
 Upon | the senten|ce of Ov|ide : in | his book|  
 That clep|ed is| : the Rem|edi|e of Lov|e,

Wheras | he saith| ;  
 " He | is a fool| : that | distour|beth the mod|er  
 " To wep|e in the deth | of hire childe| : till | she hav|e  
 " Wept | hire fil|le : as | for a cer|tain tim|e  
 " And than | shal a man| : don | his dil|igen|ce  
 " With a|miable wor|des : hire | to re|confor|te  
 " And prey|e hire of | hire we|ping : for | to stin|te."

<sup>1</sup> [I scan it by reading "fi|ve" in both places.—W. W. S.]

<sup>2</sup> Qu. *stint*. [Certainly; it is the gerund.—W. W. S.]

For whiche | reson | : this no | ble wif | Pruden | ce  
 Suf | fred hire hous | bond : for | to wep | e and cri | e  
 As | for a cer | tain spac | e : and whan | she saw |  
 Hire tim | e, she say | de to | him : in | this wis | e  
 Alas | my Lord | quod she | : why mak | e ye |  
 Yourself | for to | be like | a fool | ? forsoth | e  
 It ap | pertein | eth not | : to | a wise man |

To ma | ken swiche | a sor | we ;  
 Youre dough | ter with | the grac | e of God | : shal war | ish and escap. e.  
 And al | were it so | : that she | right now | were dede |  
 Ye | ne ought not | : as | for hire deth |  
 Youreself | to destroy | e : Sen | ek saith |

“The wise man shal not take to gret discomfort for the deth of his children, but certes he shulde suffren it in patience, as well as he abideth the deth of his owen proper persone.”

This Mel | ibe | us : an | swered anon | and said | e  
 What man | , quod he | : shul | de of his wep | ing stin | te  
 That hath | so gret | a caus | e : for | to we | pe ?  
 Je | su Crist | : our Lord | himself |  
 Wepte | for the deth | : of Laz | arus | his frend | .  
 Pruden | ce an | swered : cer | tes wel | I wote |  
 Attem | pre we | ping is | : noth | ing defen | ded  
 To him | that sor | weful is | : among folk | in sor | we  
 But | it is ra | ther : graun | ted him | to we | pe.  
 The Apos | tle Poule | : un | to the Rom | aines wri | teth  
 “Man | shall rejoyn | e : with hem | that mak | en joy | e  
 “And wep | en with | : swiche folk | as we | pen.”

But though | attem | pre we | ping : be | ygran | ted  
 Outrage | ous we | ping : cer | tes is | defen | ded .  
 Mes | ure of we | ping : shul | de be | consid | ered,  
 Af | ter the lore | : that tech | eth us | Senek | ,  
 “Whan | that thy frend | : is dede | quod he |  
 “Let | not thin ey | en : to mois | te ben | of ter | es  
 “Ne | to mucche dri | e ;  
 “Although | the ter | es : com | en to | thin ey | en,  
 “Let | hem not fal | le.  
 “And when | thou hast | : forgon | thy frend | ,  
 “Do dil | igen | ce  
 “To get | agein | : anoth | er frend |  
 “And this | is more wis | dom  
 “Than | for to we | pe : for | thy frend |  
 “Which that | thou hast lorne | : for there | in is | no bote | ’.

As the tale proceeds, the rhythmical structure gradually disappears.

This measured prose, or cadence, seems to have been

long considered, as peculiarly suitable for sermons. It was used alike in the homilies of the tenth century, and in the expositions of the seventeenth; and was probably recited in a kind of drawling chaunt, not very unlike the delivery of some dissenting ministers. It appears to have been loosely modelled on the favourite rhythms of the day, for as new forms of metre grew familiar to the popular ear, we find its character affected, and slowly varying with each successive change.

There are portions of Chaucer's cadence, which *might* have given Milton the hint, on which he fashioned his choral rhythms in the *Samson Agonistes*. But I incline to think, he borrowed them from the Italian dramas of the preceding century. In these poems, he would find not only broken verse, but also final rime, irregularly introduced, as he afterwards used it in his choruses. He tells us, indeed, that the measure of his verse "is of all sorts, called by the Greeks monostrophic, or rather apolelymenon;" but I take it, we are not to infer that he borrowed his rhythms from the Greek, but merely that he used such, as he thought would best correspond with the classical models he was ambitious of emulating. Johnson considered the versification of these choruses "so harsh and dissonant, as scarce to preserve (whether the lines end with or without rime) any appearance of metrical regularity;" and it must be confessed there are lines which almost seem to merit a censure thus severe. But modern pronunciation is *not* the pronunciation of Milton. Many verses, as they are now read by some of Milton's admirers, would disgust the poet, full as much as his critic.

The rhythm of the following chorus [in *Samson Agonistes*, 667] is incumbered with few difficulties. It has been highly praised, but surely not beyond its merits. Who can read it without admiration?

God | of our Fa|thers : what | is man | !  
 That thou | towards him | : with hand | so var|ious,  
 Or might | I say | contra|rious,  
 Tem|per'st thy prov|idence | : through his | short course |,  
 Not ev|enly, as | thou rul'st |

The Angel | ic<sup>1</sup> or | ders : and | infe | rior crea | tures mute |,  
 Irrat | ional | and brute |.  
 Nor | do I name | : of men | the com | mon rout |,  
 That wan | dering loose | about |  
 Grow up | and per | ish : as | the sum | mer fly |,  
 Heads | without name | : no more | remem | ber'd——  
 But such | as thou | hast : <sup>2</sup> solemnly | elec | ted  
 With gifts | and gra | ces : em | inently | adorn'd |,  
 To some | great work |, thy glo | ry,  
 And peo | ple's safe | ty : which | in part | they<sup>3</sup> effect |;  
 Yet | toward these | : thus dig | nified |, thou oft |  
 Amidst | their highth | of noon |,  
 Chang | est they count | enance<sup>4</sup> and | thy hand | : with no | regard |  
 Of high | est fa | vours past |  
 From thee | on them | : or them | to thee | of ser | vice.  
  
 Nor on | ly dost | degrade | them : or | remit |  
 To life | obscur'd | : which | were a fair | dismis | sion,  
 But throw'st | them low | er : than | thou didst | exalt | them high |,  
 Unseem | ly falls | : in hu | man eie |,  
 Too grie | vious for the tres | pass : or | omis | sion ;  
 Oft leav'st | them to | : the hos | tile sword |  
 Of hea | then and prophane | : their car | kasses |  
 To dogs | and fowls | a prey | : or else | captiv'd |,  
 Or | to the unjust | <sup>5</sup> tribu | nals : un | der change | of times |,  
 And con | demna | tion : of | the ingrate | ful<sup>6</sup> mul | titude.  
 If these | they scape | : perhaps | in pov | erty |  
 With sick | ness and | disease | : thou bow'st | them down |,  
 Pain | ful diseas | es and | deform'd |,  
 In crude | old age |,  
 Though not | disord | inate | : yet cause | less suf | fring,  
 The pun | ishment | : of dis | solute days |—in fine |,  
 Just | or injust | : alike | seem mis | era | ble  
 For oft | alike | : both come | to evil end |.

So deal | not with | this : once<sup>7</sup> | thy glo | rious cham | pion,  
 The im | age of | thy strength | : and migh | ty min | ister,

<sup>1</sup> Here we must read *Th'angelic*.

It should be observed, that verses of six accents, with the accents unequally divided, were common in the latter half of the sixteenth, and the beginning of the seventeenth century. Milton has used several of them in the present chorus. The rhythm was familiar at the time, but is now obsolete; and if the reader be not on his guard, may take him by surprise.

<sup>2</sup> This and the following verse afford us beautiful instances of the use of the middle pause, as an emphatic stop. See pp. 167, 168.

<sup>3</sup> Here the vowels coalesce, *they'ffect*.

<sup>4</sup> *coun'tenance*. See p. 51.

<sup>6</sup> *th'ingrateful*.

<sup>5</sup> *th'unjust*.

<sup>7</sup> See p. 167.

What | do I beg | ? : how | hast thou dealt | alread | y ?  
 Behold | him in | this state | : calam | itous | , and turn |  
 His la | bours, for | thou canst, | : to peace | ful end | .

But who | is this | : what thing | of sea | or land | ?  
 Fe | male of sex | it seems |  
 That so | bedeckt | : ornate | and gay |  
 Comes this | way sail | ing  
 Like | a state | ly ship |  
 Of Tar | sus, bound | for th' isles |  
 Of Ja | van or | Gadier |  
 With all | her brav | ery on | : and tack | le trim | ,  
 Sails fill'd | and stream | ers wav | ing,  
 Court | ed by all | the winds | : that hold | them play | ,  
 An am | ber scent | : of od | orous | perfume |  
 Her har | binger | : a dam | sel train | behind | ? &c.

The first line of this noble chorus stands by itself—a passionate burst of feeling; then comes a couplet, consisting of a verse of two sections, followed by a verse of three accents. A couplet of this kind (forming, as it were, the governing rhythm) may be traced through all the first part of the Chorus—re-appearing at intervals, like the melody<sup>2</sup> of a song, with slight variations. To give it greater relief, final rime is often added. The change of rhythm, which accompanies the appearance of Dalila, is effected by an accumulation of the shorter verses, assisted by a very artificial management of the final rimes. We have no less than four *vowel-rimes*, ranged in an inverse order;

<i>isles</i>	<i>Gadier</i>
<i>ship</i>	<i>trim</i>
<i>sailing</i>	<i>waving</i>
<i>gay</i>	<i>play</i>

This novel arrangement of an unusual rime excites the attention without satisfying the ear—particularly when contrasted with the marked character of the couplet-rime—and produces, in the mind of the hearer, a feeling of *par-*

<sup>1</sup> As to Milton's use of the secondary accent, see p. 167.

<sup>2</sup> "*Ground*. An old musical term for an air or musical subject, on which variations and divisions were to be made; the variations being called the *descant*."—Nares's Glossary; which see.



*tial recognition*, which is beautifully adapted to the sentiments conveyed.

The unrimed metres, which Campion invented in the sixteenth century, are of a widely different character from these choral rhythms of Milton. Instead of relying on the fitness—the *curiosa felicitas*—of his members,<sup>1</sup> Campion trusted to the precision of his rhythm. His attempts are not, I think, such failures, as to merit the almost total oblivion, into which they have now fallen; but the examination of them belongs more properly to the next chapter. I shall, at present, call the reader's attention to an experiment by Coleridge, which is more in Milton's manner, and in which he seems to have had the same object<sup>2</sup> in view as Campion—namely the invention of a lyrical metre, which could support itself without the aid of rime.

The following lines are addressed "To [On] a cataract from a cavern, near the summit of a mountain precipice."

## STROPHE.

Unper|ishing youth |,  
 Thou leap|est from forth |  
 The cell | of thy hid|den nativ|ity!  
 Nev|er mor|tal saw |  
 The cra|dle of | the strong | one,  
 Nev|er mor|tal heard |  
 The gath|ering of | his voic|es——  
 The deep|-murmur'd charm | of the son | of the rock|,  
 Which is lisp'd | evermore|, at his slum|berless foun|tain.  
 There's a cloud | at the por|tal, a spray|-woven veil|,  
 At the shrine | of his cease|less renew|ing;  
 It embos|oms the ros|es of dawn|,  
 It entang|les the shafts | of the noon|,  
 And in|to the bed | of its stil|lness  
 The moon|shine sinks down|, as in slum|ber——  
 That the son | of the rock|, that the nurse|ling of heav|en  
 May be born | in a ho|ly twi|light.

## ANTISTROPHE.

The wild | goat in awe|  
 Looks up | and beholds|

<sup>1</sup> [Read numbers.—W. W. S.]

<sup>2</sup> See Quart. Rev. 110. art. 24.

Above | thee the cliff | inaccess | ible !  
 Thou | at once | full-born |  
 Mad | d'nest in thy joy | ance,  
 Whirl | est, shat | ter'st, splitt'st |,  
 Life | invul | nera | ble !<sup>1</sup>

Here Coleridge attempts what Milton carefully avoided, a division into Strophe and Antistrophe. His failure, which he seems to have acknowledged by leaving the Antistrophe unfinished, shews the wisdom of Milton's forbearance. When the rhythm is left, almost without metrical restraint, to follow each change of sentiment or of feeling, we look for exquisite felicity of cadence. But, when the same rhythm is applied to different subjects, or to different divisions of the same subject, we can hardly hope it will adapt itself, with equal happiness, to *both*. The accommodation of the subject to the rhythm in the Antistrophe, is a matter of infinitely greater difficulty than the accommodation of the rhythm to the subject in the Strophe. Coleridge's rhythm in the three first lines of his Antistrophe, agrees so ill with his subject, as barely to escape the charge of burlesque.

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<sup>1</sup> I have an indistinct recollection of having seen this ode elsewhere. Is it not copied, or at least imitated from the German? [Yes; in late editions, it is said to be "improved from Stolberg."—W. W. S.]

## CHAPTER X.

## METRICAL EXPERIMENTS.

Few of our metres have been *invented* by the men who used them. The poet adopted, it may be with slight modifications, the rhythms which he found established in popular favour; and variety was obtained, either by the gradual working of such slight but continued changes, or by the introduction of foreign novelties (the church-hymns, or songs of the Troubadour, for example,) which, by fixing popular attention, at length obtained an influence over our native rhythms.

But, during the last three centuries, various attempts have been made to *originate* new forms of English metre; and the sixteenth century was particularly fruitful in these experiments. One of the most remarkable was the attempt made to imitate, in accentual verse, the temporal rhythms of the classical poets.

The "rhythmus" of the middle ages seems to have succeeded to the "metrum," by a very simple and natural process. The ancient Goth and Celt were probably as unconscious as ourselves of any metrical harmony, resulting from the disposition of long and short syllables. The only property of the classical verse they could appreciate, must have been the arrangement of the syllables, on which fell the sharp tone and the *ictus*. The laws, which regulated the position of these syllables, were sufficiently definite (at least among the later Latin poets) to give very clear notions of rhythmical proportion. The monk, therefore, though in his *rhythmus* he neglected the quantity of his syllables, gave to his verse all the properties, which his *ear* had been taught to recognise in the classical *metrum*.

But in the experiments, which have been made during the last three centuries, a very different course has been

followed. Instead of the accent representing the sharp tone, or the ictus, it has been considered as a substitute for the *long quantity*. The vague notions which prevailed as to the nature of *accent*, long kept out of sight the difficulties, that necessarily flowed from such a condition. Accental *spondees* were talked of, without the least suspicion of absurdity, and though there was much difference of opinion as to many of the examples quoted, yet all seem to have admitted that such a combination of accents was possible. When at last it was discovered, that accented syllables could not come together without the intervention of a pause, it was holden, that a "spondee" might in all cases be represented by a "trochee." In this way, much of the difficulty that stood in the way of these experiments was got rid of; and certainly by aid of such substitution all the most serious obstacles were removed. Still, however, the experiments did not succeed, and it may be well to notice some of the causes, which probably led to this result.

In the Latin "*rhythmus*," the *middle pause* was the pivot on which the whole verse turned; in the later imitations it was almost wholly neglected. The omission was more particularly felt in the longer verses, such as the Hexameter. According to analogy, the English hexameter should have adopted the favourite pause of the classical, and have divided after the first (or, in case of the *trochaic caesura*, the second) syllable of the third metre.

Again, in our English hexameters (which were the most common, and by far the most important of these classical imitations) the rhythm was, for the most part, much too loose. It followed the triple rather than the common measure, and, as there was seldom any pause to rest upon, the reader was hurried forward by the "breathless dactyles," as Hall sneeringly calls them. When this galloping rhythm was checked by the "drawling spondees," the flow of the verse too often resembled that of the tumbling metres, and was open to a criticism, which has been attributed to Wordsworth; it was "too little metrical at the beginning of a line, and too much so at the close."

If it be urged, that *German* hexameters but seldom take

the pause, and generally incline to the triple measure, it might be answered, that we are not arguing against the *possibility* of writing English hexameters with loose rhythm, and without any settled pause, but merely pointing out some of the causes which have contributed to their failure. I will, however, confess I have seen few German hexameters which, to my ear, were satisfactory; and though it is hard to say whither association may not lead us, I think it must be difficult, even for a German, to connect any notions of dignity with a rhythm, so loose and tumbling.

But the great objection to our English hexameters is one, that rarely attaches to the German—I mean *false accentuation*. A false accent is always objectionable, however precise the rhythm may be, and however familiar to the reader; but if this kind of “license” be taken, when the rhythm is loose and *new* to the reader, what means has he of following the writer? The only clue, which can guide him through the labyrinth, is then broken.

Now in few kinds of metre have we more of false accentuation than in these “classical imitations.” Spenser and his contemporaries were led to it, by confounding the rules of Latin and English prosody. In one of his letters he gives it as his opinion, that such words as *carpenter*, in which the middle syllable was “used short in speech when it should be read long in verse,” might be “won with custom;” and simply asks, “why (a’ God’s name) may not we, as the Greeks, have the kingdom of our own language, and measure our accents by the sound, reserving the quantity to the verse?” Later writers have been misled by the fatal example of Milton. Indeed, so little have our accents of *construction* been studied, that Harris was guilty of no less than two blunders, in scanning the very line which he quotes, as a “perfect hexameter.”

Why | do the hea|then rage|, and the peo|ple imag|ine a vain  
thing?

Here the accent on the conjunction is slurr’d over, and the adjective accented more strongly than its substantive. Properly read, the line would read thus,

Why | do the hea|then rage|, and | the peo|ple imag|ine a vain  
thing|?

By adopting the favourite pause of the Latin hexameter, we should obtain an accentual verse, which might be thus defined. It would open with an abrupt section of three accents, admitting of a lengthening syllable; and would close with a lengthened section of three accents, beginning with one unaccented syllable,<sup>1</sup> and having two such syllables before the last accent.<sup>2</sup> A verse like this would differ from the Latin "rhythmus," first, as to the property of the classical metre, represented by its accent; and, secondly, in the *variable* number of its syllables. I think, however, it might be turned to good account, especially in translation. The rhythm would, probably, be sufficiently precise, at the same time it would admit of considerable variety; and if it were kept *well in hand*, the writer never suffering the "dactyles" to run away with him, it might perhaps possess somewhat of that dignity, which is so seldom to be met with in our tumbling hexameters.

The following *exercise* may help to make my meaning clearer. It claims no other merit than that of being a line-for-line translation; but may serve, in some measure, to test an instrument, which, in more skilful hands, might possibly give out no indifferent music.

Sing the wrath, O Goddess : Achilles' wrath the Pelides !  
Deadly it was, and whelm'd : with many a woe the Achaians,  
Many a soul it sent : of hero brave into Hades,  
Ere his time, and left : his limbs to the dog and the vulture,  
Mangled and torn a prey : E'en thus Zeus' will was accomplisht,  
From the day when first : they strove and parted in anger—  
He, the king of men : Atrides, and godlike Achilles.

Which of the Gods impell'd : these two to the fatal encounter ?  
Zeus and Leto's son : He, wrath with the king, in his anger,  
Plague through the army sent : and thick and fast fell the soldiers ;

<sup>1</sup> One kind of verse has been purposely omitted. A section beginning with two unaccented syllables is for several reasons so inconvenient, that it is better to get rid of it altogether.

<sup>2</sup> This metre is pretty closely followed in the first twenty lines of Southey's *Vision of Judgment*; and who can read that splendid opening without pleasure ?

For that Atreus' son : had Chryses evil entreated,  
 When to the ships the priest : came laden with ransom, and offer'd  
 Gifts of untold price : to rescue his daughter from bondage,  
 And the God's fillet bare : in hand—far-shooting Apollo's—  
 High on the golden staff : Full humbly he sued the Achaians,  
 But the two sons of Atreus : most sued, as chiefs of the people.

" Sons of Atreus, and all : ye other grieve-arm'd Achaians,  
 " May the Gods speed your wish : (that dwell in abodes of Olympus)  
 " Priam's towns to raze : and win your way happily homeward !  
 " But to me my child : my lov'd one release, and the ransom  
 " Take to yourselves, and fear : Zeus' son, far-shooting Apollo."

Then, on all sides, their wish : out spake the other Achaians  
 Him the priest to honour : and take the bounteous ransom,  
 But ill pleas'd at heart : was Atreus' son Agamemnon—  
 He the priest dismiss'd : with insult and bitterest menace.

" Let me not, old man, : beside these hollow ribb'd gallies  
 " Find thee ling'ring now : or hither henceforth returning,  
 " Lest the God's staff and fillet : perchance may little avail thee.  
 " Her will I not release : before old age overtake her,  
 " In our distant home : at Argos, far from her country,  
 " Driving along the shuttle : and mounting my bed to partake it.  
 " Hence ! and anger me not : that safe may be thy departure."

Thus he spake ; the old man : sore trembled, and straightway obey'd  
 him.

Silent he paced the shore : far beat by the billowy ocean,  
 All alone he went : then pray'd full oft to Apollo,  
 Pray'd to his King and God : the son of Leto the fair-haired.

" Thou of the silver bow : who Chryses ever encirclest,  
 " And thrice holy Killa : who Tenedos sway'st at thy pleasure,  
 " Hear me, Smintheus ! if ere : I crown'd thy beauteous temple,  
 " If to thee I burnt : fat off'ring entire on thine altar,  
 " Haunch of bull or goat : this one request do thou grant me—  
 " May the Achaians rue : my tears, avenged by thine arrows !"

Thus he spake ; his pray'r : was heard by Phœbus Apollo.  
 Wrath at heart he left : the topmost heights of Olympus,  
 Down from his shoulders hung : the fatal bow, and the quiver  
 Closed all around : and, as he came in his anger,  
 Rattled the arrows of death : and black as night was his coming.

Our poets did not confine their attention to the " Heroic  
 verse " of classical Literature. Sidney has left us specimens  
 of the " Elegiac metre ;" but though he succeeded somewhat  
 better in the pentameter (owing to the very marked charac-

ter of its pause) than in the accompanying hexameter, his imitations of neither are worthy of his reputation. The happiest attempt which has been made to follow the Ovidian metre is a version of two German lines by Coleridge. He describes and exemplifies it in the following couplet;

In | the hexam|eter ris|es : the foun|tain's sil|very col|umn,  
In | the pentam|eter aye|: fal|ling in mel|ody back|:

Spenser's hexameters have perished; and if we may judge from his "trimetra," without much loss to his reputation. It would have been as well if the latter had followed them. We have seen<sup>1</sup> what kind of "rhythmus" belonged to the Iambic *Senarius*—the following staves are part of Spenser's imitation.

Now doe I nightly waste, wanting my kindellie reste,  
Now doe I daiely starve, wanting my daily foode,  
Now doe I always dye, wanting my timely mirth.

And if I waste, who will bewaile my heavy chaunce?  
And if I starve, who will record my cursed end?  
And if I dye, who will saye, "this was Immerito?"

Well might his friend Harvey doubt, if the lines were "so precisely perfect for the feete," as the poet "over partially weened, and over confidently avouched!"

"English Sapphics" were probably written in the sixteenth century, certainly not long after the year 1600. A specimen of their rhythm may be found in bk. i. c. 5.<sup>2</sup> The following imitation of the "Catullian Hendecasyllables" we owe to Coleridge.

Hear | my belov|ed : an old | Miles|ian sto|ry!  
High | and embos|om'd : in con|grega|ted lau|rels,  
Glim|mer'd a tem|ple : upon | a bfeez|y head|land;  
In | the dim dis|tance : amid | the sky|ey bil|lows  
Rose | a fair is|land : the God | of flocks | had plac'd | it.  
From | the far shores| : of the bleak | resounding is|land,  
Oft | by the moon|light : a lit|tle boat | came float|ing,  
Came | to the sea|-cave : beneath | the breez|y head|land,  
Where | amid myr|tles : a path|way stole | in maz|es,  
Up | to the groves| : of the high | embos|om'd tem|ple.

<sup>1</sup> See p. 515.

<sup>2</sup> P. 109.



There | in a thic|ket : of ded|icated ros|es,  
 Oft | did a pries|tess : as love|ly as | a vis|ion,  
 Pouring her soul| : to the son | of Cyth|ere | a  
 Pray | him to hov|er : around | the slight | canoe|-boat,  
 And | with invis|ible : pi|lotage | to guide | it, &c.

Coleridge, it is seen, substitutes a *dactyle* for the two-syllabled foot, which begins the verse of his classical model; and so converts the "hendecasyllable" into a verse of twelve syllables. This he doubtless did with the view of accommodating his verse to the fashionable rhythms of the day. But, in experiments of this kind, the reader *looks for novelty*; and the ear would soon familiarize itself with a metre, which should consist of the verses 1 l. 5 l. and 1 ll. 1 l., the first section of course taking the two accents. If such a rhythm were thought monotonous, it might be varied by occasionally using 2 l. or 2 ll., as the first section. Would some of Coleridge's lines be *very much* injured by thus lopping them of a syllable? With such curtailment they would certainly come nearer to the rhythm of the "hendecasyllable."

Hear, my lov'd one : an old Milesian story !  
 High, and bosom'd : in congregated laurels,  
 Glimmer'd a temple : upon a breezy headland,  
 Far in Ocean : amid the skyey billows,  
 Rose an island : the God of flocks had placed it, &c.

These imitations of the classical metres were not the only means taken, in the sixteenth century, to introduce novelty into English versification. The necessity of rime was not only questioned, but its *utility* denied. Campion, who led the attack against it, has left us a treatise, wherein, amid much vague and inconsequential reasoning, we sometimes catch glimpses of the real principles on which English verse depends. The result of his criticism was the recommendation of certain metres, which he thought especially suited to certain subjects, and at the same time sufficiently rhythmical to support themselves without the aid of rime. His "Iambics," or the metre selected for "triumphs of princes and stern tragedies," are nothing more than our modern blank verse.

Goe numbers, boldly passe, stay not for ayde,  
 Of shifting rime, that easie flatterer,  
 Whose witchcraft can the ruder eares beguile;  
 Let your smooth feete, enured to purer arte,  
*True measures tread, &c.*

His "Dimeters," as he calls them, were recommended for the "Chorus in a tragedy."

Raving warre, begot  
 In the thirstye sands  
 Of the Lybian iles,  
 Wastes our emptye fields, &c.

His "Trochaic,"<sup>1</sup> "Anacreontic,"<sup>2</sup> and "Elegiac"<sup>3</sup> metres have been already noticed. The rhythm of the last is peculiar, and might, perhaps, in some few cases, be used to advantage.

Campion sometimes aimed at novelty by *breaking his verses*. As the broken stave (of which we shall have to speak hereafter) had been already introduced into our poetry, there was little *originality* in the attempt; but it may be well to notice one or two of the results. His "Sapphic" verses have for their subject "a triumph at Whitehall."

Loe they sonnd, the knights in order armed  
 Entring threat the lists, addrest in combat,  
 For their courtly loves; he—*he's* the wonder,  
 Whom Eliza graceth.

Their plum'd pomp the vulgar heaps detaineth,  
 And rough steeds—let us the still devices  
 Close observe, the speeches and the music,  
 Peaceful arms adorning, &c.

The following song is written in numbers "fit to expresse any amorous conceite." It appears to me extremely beautiful.

Rose-cheek't Lawra, come!  
 Sing thou smoothly with thy beauties  
 Silent musick, either other  
 Sweetely gracing.

<sup>1</sup> P. 232.<sup>2</sup> P. 180.<sup>3</sup> P. 249.

Lovely forms do flowe  
 From concent deuinely framed,  
 Heau'n is musick, and thy beawties  
 Burth is heauenly.

These dull notes we sing  
 Discords neede for helps to grace them;  
 Only beawtie purely loving  
 Knowes no discorde;

But still moues delight,  
 Like cleare springs renu'd by flowing,  
 Euer perfet, euer in them-  
 selves eternal.

Of all the experiments, made in our versification during the sixteenth century, those depending on the sectional pause now strike the ear as most singular. Some of these have been already noticed in bk. i. c. 7. In the song<sup>1</sup> written by Sir Philip Sidney, every verse takes the pause, but the situation of the pause is not regulated by any well-defined law. In Shakespeare's song,<sup>2</sup> its place is *fixed*. This appears to have been the more usual mode of introducing it, and is certainly the safest. When the reader is thus forewarned and prepared for its occurrence, the pause may sometimes be made to answer very valuable purposes. The peculiar character which it imparts to the rhythm, may often be used advantageously, to mark the divisions of a stave; and this was one of the chief uses to which it was formerly put. The old Scotch song "aganis the Ladyes," may serve for an example. [See *Ancient Scottish Poems*, ed. Pinkerton.]

Sen Adam, our progenitour,  
 (First creat be the Lord)  
 Believ'd his wickit paramour,  
 Quha counsal'd him discord,  
 Persuading him for to accord  
 Unto the deils report,  
 Dull | dull | : dreis | the man  
 That trests into that sort.

Thair belts, thair broches, and thair rings  
 Mak biggings bair at hame,

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<sup>1</sup> P. 151.

<sup>2</sup> P. 152.

Thair hudes, thair chymours, thair garnyshings  
 For to augment thair fame.  
 Scho sall thairfoir be calt Madame,  
 Botand the laird maid knycht,  
 Grit | grit | : is | thair grace |,  
 Howbeit thair rents be slicht, &c.

Later writers have seldom ventured on these experiments. It is true, they sometimes give a marked character to their rhythm, but one, in the language of Bede, "non artificii moderatione servatam, sed sono et ipsâ modulatione ducente." Thus, in his melodies, Moore sometimes makes his rhythm oscillate round the verse 6 l : 6. of five accents.

They slander thee sorely : who say thy vows are frail,  
 Hadst thou been a false one : thy cheek had been less pale,  
 They say, too, so long : thou hast worn those ling'ring chains,  
 That deep in thy heart : they have printed their servile stains.  
 Oh ! do not believe them<sup>1</sup> : no chain could that soul subdue  
 Where shineth thy spirit : there liberty shineth too.

[*The Irish Peasant to his Mistress, st. 3.*]

Before we close the chapter, it may be well to notice an opinion that has prevailed on the subject of our heroic verse, the investigation of which may open views of the *general capabilities* of English metre. Many of our poets have considered our heroic verse as subjected to stricter laws, and as imposing greater difficulties on those who wrote it, than the heroic verse of classical literature. As the latter admitted a dactyle or foot of three syllables in five places, and our heroic verse only in two, the greater facility of the former was looked upon as settled. At the present day it will hardly be necessary to combat this notion, or to show how much more rhythmical is the verse, which has not only all its feet equivalent in respect to quantity, but has even its accented or sharp-toned syllables regulated by rule. As, however, opinions seldom last long, unless they contain some truth, it may be worth while inquiring how much of it

<sup>1</sup> [In some editions—"Oh ! foul is the slander, no chain could that soul subdue."]

has sufficed to give currency to notions, certainly on the whole erroneous.

Verse is distinguished from prose by its metre, or in other words by the *selection* of its rhythms. The law, which limits the selection, may be more or less comprehensive, but when once adopted should be scrupulously observed. If the poem be short, and contain little change of feeling or of sentiment, a confined rhythm is not always a disadvantage; if it contain variety of sentiment, there should be corresponding variety in the rhythm. In all cases, however, the law of the metre should be *clear* and *definite*.

Now the excellence of the hexameter consisted in the union of two very different qualities—its metre was at once definite and comprehensive. Though governed by laws most strictly scientific, its cadence was allowed a variety of flow, that easily adapted itself to every change of subject. Our heroic verse was fashioned on that of five accents and ten syllables. A metre so confined, that even Gaskoyne felt the thralldom, was ill-suited to the genius or the temper of Milton; and he struggled hard for freedom. He varied the flow of the rhythm, and lengthened the sections, *these* were legitimate alterations; he split the sections, and overlaid the pauses, and the law of his metre was broken, the *science* of his versification gone. The giant put on the habiliments of the dwarf—could he do otherwise than rend them?

The inferiority of our heroic verse, as a means of poetical expression, must be acknowledged; but its facility, in point of versification, is no less clear. Its rhythm is so obvious, that we often use it when writing prose; and one author, who makes the same remark, illustrates it (all unconsciously it would seem) by his own example, “such verse | we make | when | we are writ|ing prose|—we make | such verse | in com|mon con|versa|tion.”

It may be asked, has our language no metre which may satisfy the demands alike of science and of genius? Can it furnish no *well-defined* system of rhythm, fit to embody the conceptions of a man like Milton? Is accentual rhythm (for the question ultimately resolves itself into this) so in-

ferior to the temporal, that, to be definite, it must be crippled and confined; to be comprehensive, it must be vague and desultory?

Whether any of our poets have used such a metre, is a question that may raise a doubt; that our language could have furnished it, admits of none. Suppose a metre to consist of verses of five accents, rejecting the sectional pause; here we have a very simple and definite law, admitting of a varied rhythm, which might satisfy even a Milton's passion for variety. It would allow of no less than 1296 verses,<sup>1</sup> each possessing its peculiar cadence. Of these some classes might possibly have a rhythm ill-suited to the author's subject; but if two-thirds were rejected, surely no one could complain that his genius had been cramped by the narrow range of his metre?

Of all the metres known to our poetry, that which has best succeeded in reconciling the poet's freedom with the demands of science, is the alliterative system of our Anglo-Saxon ancestors. If the compound and pausing sections be rejected, the *scheme* of its rhythm (or rather that to which it tended to approximate) may be thus defined. Its verses admitted from four to six accents, and each verse contained two, and the longer verses three alliterative syllables. A metre thus definite might be made to include almost every rhythm that has been used in our poetry. The writer might pass from the common measure to the triple, from the epic rhythm to the lyrical; he might raise his style to a level with the highest, or lower it to that of the humblest theme; he might, in short, make his rhythm ever answer to the subject, and adapt itself to every change of feeling and of sentiment. But where shall we find the men, that would use these opportunities without abusing them?—where mental vigour to resist the temptations, which extreme facility holds out, and at the same time capacity large enough, to fill up an outline thus varied and extensive?

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<sup>1</sup> P. 160.

## BOOK IV.

## CHAPTER I.

## STAVES.

A STAVE is a portion of a song or poem, containing a given number of verses, arranged according to some given law, and ending with a period, or at least with some important division of a sentence. When two or more staves are knit together into one, the compound stave thence resulting may be called a stanza—a name that seems to have been first applied to the compound Italian staves, which came into fashion during the sixteenth century.

The peculiarity of Gothic verse, to which we have so often alluded under the name of *parallelism*, would, doubtless, have led the way in our own language (as it certainly did in the Icelandic) to the invention of the stave. Some critics have even discovered imperfect staves in the lyrical portions of our Anglo-Saxon poems, and so symmetrical are the forms, in which the periods sometimes arrange themselves, that no one can feel surprise at the conclusions they have drawn.

The great obstacle to the introduction of regular staves seems to have been the mode in which the stops were regulated in Anglo-Saxon verse. As most sentences ended in the middle of a couplet, the stave must have closed with an odd section, and broken alliteration, or the popular ear been accustomed to a new termination of the period. The Icelanders *had* staves that included this kind of solitary section, but they appear to have been of later date than the simpler staves, and, notwithstanding a change in

the riming letters, I rather suspect they originated in the use of the *compound* section, and were, in fact, nothing more than the sequel of the section or verse preceding.

When, in the eleventh century, the middle stop became subordinate to the final, this difficulty vanished; and many contemporary English poems are found divided into periods, which have little to distinguish them from the simpler kind of Icelandic staves. The Icelandic stave was sometimes expanded from four to six, or even more, verses; in these English staves the same liberty was more largely and also more frequently taken; but there are poems in which the staves are of the same length throughout, and the rhythmical structure are not very unlike that which is found in the Icelandic. The following version of the 130th Psalm was made late in the eleventh, or early in the twelfth century. If the MS. be correctly published,<sup>1</sup> each section was written as a distinct verse.

Nis | min heor | te with | the  
Ahaf | en Drih | ten  
Ne | mine eag | an with | the  
On o | ferhyg | de

Ne | ic on mæg | ene  
Mic | lum gang | e  
Ne wun | dur o | fer me |  
Wun | iath æn | ig

Ac ic | mid eath | medum  
Eall | gethaf | ige  
Is | min sawl | on thon |  
Swy | the gefeon | de

Swa man | æt med | er bith  
Mic | lum fed | ed  
Swa | thu min | re sawl | e  
Sym | ble gyl | dest

Is | rahel | as on Drih | ten  
A | getreow | igen  
Of | thissum nu |  
A | wa to wor | ulde

Mine heart is not 'gainst thee  
Uplifted, Lord !  
Nor mine eyes 'gainst thee,  
In pride of soul.

Nor do I walk  
In grandeur of Power ;  
Nor doth any wondrous thing  
Around me dwell.

But I with the lowly-minded,  
In all, consent—  
My soul therewith  
Is right joyful !

As by his mother man  
Is richly nourish'd,  
So thou my soul  
Wilt ever bless.

Let men of Israel in the Lord  
Aye put their trust,  
From this present—  
Ever, for ages !

<sup>1</sup> *Libri Psalmorum*, Oxford 1835 [edited by B. Thorpe], published at the expense of the University from an Anglo-Saxon MS., now in the *Bibliothèque du Roi*.



It seems, indeed, that, during the eleventh and early half of the twelfth century, our versification was gradually taking a form, in all essential particulars, the same as the Icelandic. Had it continued free from foreign influences but one century longer, it might have exhibited all those peculiarities of structure, which were afterwards adopted by the Icelandic, and which render the prosody of that language so complicated and difficult; and it is even probable, that some of these peculiarities may yet be discovered in the MSS., which a more careful search will doubtless bring to light. The development of our rhythms in this direction appears to have been checked by the foreign novelties, which first began to exercise an influence over our rhythms in the twelfth century. To such of these as have contributed to the formation of our staves, I must now call the attention of the reader.

The classical staves which admitted variety of verse (the Sapphic and Alcaic for instance), though some of them were well-known during the middle ages, seem to have had but little influence on the modern versification of Europe. The later Latin poets generally preferred those staves, which contained only one description of verse. In the church-hymns, the Iambic Dimeter is always found in staves of four verses; the imperfect Trochaic Tetrameter almost always in staves of three; the Asclepiad in staves of four; and the Iambic Trimeter in staves of five. All these staves were used in "rhythmus;" and it is probable that the staff of four verses, with eight syllables to the verse, now so common throughout Europe, may represent the *first*; <sup>1</sup> and some of our tumbling staves of four verses, with continuous rime, the *third* of these classical combinations. Speculations, however, of this kind require extreme caution, and will be more largely entered into hereafter. It may suffice, for the present, to point out to the reader *one* of the sources, whence our modern staves derive their origin.

The staves, fashioned on these classical models, rimed

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<sup>1</sup> Whether our English staff, when it takes the *interwoven* rime, represents the Iambic rhythmus, may perhaps be doubted. See p. 514.

for the most part *continuously*. It may, however, be questioned, whether the continuous rime, instead of being thus a mere unessential accident, were not, in some cases, the governing principle, on which the stave was formed. Continuous rime is found in the earliest Celtic and Romance poems, running through an indeterminate number of verses. Were the number once *fixed*, and the prevalence of the classical staves would have a tendency to bring irregularity within bounds, we might readily account for many of the early staves, thus furnished with continuous rime. Perhaps, when their history is more clearly traced, *some* of them may be found to have originated in this manner.

But of all the agents, used in the formation of our staves, that which appears to have been most active is certainly the *mixed rime*. Mixed rime was used in Latin verse at a very early period—perhaps as early as the fourth century. Whence they got it, it would be difficult to say. It seems to have been unknown to the early poetry of the Welsh and Irish; and also, as far as we can judge from extant MSS., to *every* modern language before the twelfth century. At the beginning of this century we find it familiarly used by the Troubadour; and, at the end of the century, it was used by our countrymen in their Romance poems. The earliest *English* poem with mixed rime, is, I believe, in the Layamon MS., and *may* have been written before the year 1200, though I would rather fix it a few years after that date. The mixed rime spread gradually, but slowly, over Europe, and seems to have reached Iceland with the hymns, that ushered in the Reformation.

Some of our early English specimens of the mixed rime are of complicated structure; and were, probably, borrowed from the Troubadour. But the far greater number had the rime regulated according to a few very simple principles, which, though neither invented nor exclusively used by our poets, seem to have had a greater influence on the formation of our English staves than can be traced in the versification of any other people. Before, however, we discuss the nature of these principles, it may be necessary to take some notice of a passage which is

found in the Prologue to Robert Brunne's Chronicle, and which has, more than once, been the subject of unsuccessful criticism. For the sake of the mere English reader it will be accompanied with a literal translation—a precaution which I cannot think useless, as I have hitherto seen no

---

Als thai haf wrytenn and sayd <sup>1</sup>  
Haf I alle in myn Inglis layd  
In symple speche as I couthe  
That is lightest in mannes mouthe.

I mad nought for no disours  
Ne for no seggers no harpours  
Bot for the luf of symple menn  
That strange Inglis cann not kenn.  
For many it ere that strange Inglis  
In ryme wate neuer what it is  
And bot thai wist what it mente  
Ellis we thocht it were alle shente.

I made it not for to be praysed  
Both at the lewed menn were aysed.  
If it were made in ryme couwee  
Or in strangere or enterlace  
That rede Inglis it ere inowe  
That couthe not haf coppled a kowe  
That outhere in couwee or in baston  
Sum suld haf ben fordon  
So that fele men that it herde  
Suld not witte howe that it ferde.

I see in song in sedgeyng tale  
Of Erceldoun and of Kendale  
Non tham says as thai tham wrought  
And in ther sayng it semes nought.  
That may thou here in Sir Tristrem  
Ouer gestes it has the steem  
Ouer all that is or was  
If menn it sayd as made Thomas.  
Bot I here it no mann so say  
That of som copple som is away  
So<sup>2</sup> thare fayre saying here beforne  
Is thare trauayle nere forlorne.

---

<sup>1</sup> [See Rob. of Brunne's translation of Peter Langtoft, ed. Hearne, p. xcix.—W. W. S.]      <sup>2</sup> [Of (for So) would give better sense.—W. W. S.]

attempt at translation, in which the sense or construction has not been, more or less, mistaken. The passage indeed (if it be rightly transcribed) contains difficulties, which may make indulgence as necessary for the present attempt, as for any which have preceded it.

---

As *they* have written and said,  
I have in my English laid down all,  
In simple speech, such as I was acquainted with—  
Such as is easiest in men's mouth.

I wrote not for any *disours*,  
Not for reciters, nor harpers,  
But for the love of simple men  
That *strange* English do not know.  
For many are there who, as to *strange* English  
In rime, know never what it means.  
And unless they knew what was meant,  
Methought it would be all lost.

I wrote it, not to be praised,  
But that the unschool'd men might be eased.  
If it were made in *ryme cowee*  
Or in *strangere*, or *enterlace*—  
Of those, that read English, there would be enow  
That could not have coupled a *howe*.  
So that either in *cowee* or in *baston*  
Some would have been confounded,  
So that many men, that heard it,  
Should not know how it went.

I see, in songs and in recited tales  
Of Erceldoun and Kendale,  
That no one repeats them, as *they* made them;  
And in such recital all seems nought.  
That mayest thou hear in Sir Tristrem—  
Before all *gests* it has the preference,  
Before every one that is or was,  
If men would repeat it, as Thomas made it.  
But I hear no man *so* repeat it;  
For that of some *couple* some part is always away.  
So their fair recital (heretofore)  
And their labour is nigh lost.

Thai sayd it for pride and nobleye  
 That non were suylk as thei  
 And alle that thai wild ouerwhere  
 Alle that ilk wille now forfare.  
 Thai sayd [it] in so quainte Inglis  
 That manyone wate not what it is  
 Therfore heuyed [*sic*] wele the more  
 In strange ryme to trauayle sore  
 And my witte was oure thynne  
 So *strange* speche to trauayle in  
 And forsoth I couth nought  
 So strange Inglis as thai wroght  
 And menn besoght me many a tyme  
 To turn it bot in light ryme.

Thai sayd if I in strange it turne  
 To here it manyon suld skurne.  
 For it ere names fulle selcouthe  
 That ere not used now in mouthe.  
 And therfore for the comonalte  
 That blythely wild listen to me  
 On light lange I it begann  
 For luf of the lewed mann.

We will not stop to discuss the meaning of "baston," "strangere," and "strange Inglis," as these phrases are not only obscure, but have no immediate relevancy to the subject now before us. We will confine ourselves to an investigation of the terms, "couple," "kowe," "ryme cowee," and "ryme enterlacee." I cannot think we need go quite so far in search of their meaning, as some of the critics who have preceded us.

Tyrwhitt first pointed out the connection between the

For Ed | ward god | e ded | e      } a wik | ked bounte |  
 The Bal | iol did | him med | e

Turne | we ageyn | to red | e      } a Mad | dok ther | left we  
 And on | our ges | te to sped | e

Now is Morgan 3olden : and Maddok he bendes  
 The Kyng comen to London : by consail of his frendes  
 Two Cardenalles of Rome : the Pape hider sent  
 To Paris bothe thei come : to the parlement, &c.

They repeated it from a feeling of pride and of display,  
 That none might be such as they were ;  
 And all that they would [have everywhere known ?]  
 All that will now be lost.  
 They repeated it in such quaint English,  
 That many one knows not what it means.  
 Therefore was I the more loath  
 In *strange* rime to labour hard ;  
 And my wit was too thin  
 Such *strange* speech to labour in.  
 And in truth I knew not  
 Such *strange English* as they composed.  
 And men besought me, many a time,  
 To turn it only into easy rime.

They said, if I in *strange* should turn it,  
 Many one would scorn to hear it,  
 For there are names full strange,  
 That are not used now in speech ;  
 And therefore, for the commonalty,  
 That blithely would listen to me,  
 In easy language, I it began,  
 For love of the unschool'd man.

---

"ryme cowee" and "ryme enterlacee," and the versus *caudati* and *interlaqueati* of the Latinist. Robert of Brunne, notwithstanding his protest against these kinds of verse, has left us specimens of both, for some of his rhythms are indexed in the margin as "cowee," and others as "enterlacee." Generally, his "cowee" verse is written like his alexandrines ; but occasionally we find it written in a form, which may, I think, afford us a clue to the real meaning of the phrase. [See Hearne's edition, p. 266.]

---

For Edward's good deed  
 The Baliol gave him, as his meed, } a wicked return !

Turn we again to our tale, }  
 And on our *Gest* to speed— } where we a Maddok left.

Now is Morgan taken, and Maddok he bends under ;  
 The King is come to London, by counsel of his friends.  
 Two Cardinals of Rome hither the Pope sent ;  
 To Paris they came both, to the parliament, &c.



Mostly, however, Robert of Brunne puts fewer accents into his "cowee" verse, and writes it in one line, as in the

---

Armes now 3ow alle : that non him withdrawe  
 How it may best falle : I haf 3ow said the sawe  
*Couwe* ¶ When 3e haf | the pris | of 3our | enmys | : non | salle 3e  
                   sav | e  
 Smyt | e with suerd | in hand | alle | Northum | berland | : with  
                   right | salle 3e have  
 And Ing | land 3it alle | for wer | re salle | : be tint | for this  
                   dred | e  
 Scotte neu | er bigan | unto Ing | lis man | : to do | so doun ty  
                   ded | e.

---

The original, on which these latter verses seem to be loosely modelled, was, no doubt, the alexandrine, or rather its substitute, (for the verse, in such case, loses all the essential properties of the alexandrine,) divided into two sections of four and two accents—of which the former takes the sectional rime. The verses in the first example may also have been formed from the alexandrine by a duplication of the first section. When the riming sections, or (in the other case) the sectional rimes were included within brackets, the remainder of the verse was written as a *kowe*—that is, as a tail or pendant; and verse, which admitted of such arrangement, seems to have been called "ryme cowee," or tail-verse. In some kinds of verse, several rimes were included within the bracket; and hence we may understand the difficulty, which rude and unskilful rimesters felt in "coppling a kowe,"—that is, I take it, in riming the tail or "kove" with a verse, from which it was separated by so wide an interval.

If this interpretation be the true one, the term "coppie" does not (as Walter Scott conjectured) mean a riming couplet, nor (as Price conjectured) an alliterative couplet, but merely the correspondence which exists between two riming lines, whether immediately connected, or widely separated from each other.

In "ryme enterlacee," or interwoven verse, Robert of Brunne has written nearly all the latter part of his Chronicle.

following example. [See Hearne's edition, p. 276.]

---

" Arm ye now all, that no one him withdraw—  
 " How it may best fall out, I have you told the way.  
 " When ye have the vantage of your en'mies, none shall ye save ;  
 " Smite with sword in hand ! all Northumberland with right shall ye  
     have !  
 " And all England, moreover, shall for the war be lost—for dread of  
     this !  
 " Scot never began on Englishman such doughty deed to do ! "

---

Several specimens of it have already been laid before the reader, one of which may be found at p. 519.

Both these kinds of mixed rime were known to the Latinist, and at a very early period. In one of the Cotton MSS.<sup>1</sup> there is a letter, written in riming hexameters, which is ascribed to Pope Damasus, who lived in the fourth century. The five first couplets have the interwoven rime.

Cartula nostra *tibi* portat, Rainolde, salutes ;  
 Pauca videbis *ibi*, sed non mea dona refutes ;  
 Dulcia sunt *animæ* solatia quæ tibi mando,  
 Sed prosunt *minime* nisi serves hæc operando.  
 Quod mea verba *monent*, tu noli tradere vento,  
 Cordis in aure *sonent*, et sic retinere memento, &c.

Other examples may be found at somewhat later periods, and in the tenth and eleventh centuries this rime was spread over Europe.

The "cowee," or tail-verse, was quite as much in favour with the monks as the interwoven. The following *versus caudati* are taken from the work of Theodatus, "De contemptu Mundi," and are of the tenth century.

Pauper *amabilis* et venerabilis est benedictus,  
 Dives inutilis insatiabilis est maledictus,  
 Qui bona negligit, et mala diligit, intrat abyssum,  
 Nulla pecunia, nulla potentia liberat ipsum,

---

<sup>1</sup> Titus, D. xxii. f. 91.



*Irremeabilis, insatiabilis illa vorago,  
Hic ubi mergitur, horrida cernitur omnis imago, &c.*

There is yet a third kind of mixed rime, which, though it has had less influence on our English than on certain foreign rhythms, deserves some notice. It may be called the *close rime*, inasmuch as one "copple" or pair of rimes is, as it were, shut up within the other. This, like the interwoven and tail-rime, seems to have been first used by the Latinist. We have an example of it in the "preludium" to the Life of St. Malchus,<sup>1</sup> written soon after the year 1100 by Reginald, a monk of Canterbury. It begins thus—

*Prelia gesturus pelago navalia miles  
Dat pugnae similes ludos prius, et quasi durus  
Hostis cernatur, belli simulachra figurat,  
Currit, maturat, secum pugnando jocatur, &c.*

The staves which resulted from the application of the mixed rime, were varied by two very simple expedients. Sometimes two or more of these staves were combined together, so as to form a compound-stave; and occasionally some portion of the stave was *repeated*. This kind of repetition was used by the monk to vary even the classical metres. Thus he obtained a new kind of elegiac metre, by repeating the hexameter—each pentameter being preceded by *two* instead of the single hexameter required by the classical model.

Besides the staves which originated in mixed and continuous rime, there are others, which have sprung from the use of the Wheel and Burthen. By the latter of these terms I would understand the return of the same words at the close of each stave, and by the former the return of some marked and peculiar rhythm.

It would seem when a wheel or burthen once became familiar to the popular ear, it was often used in other staves with a view to recommend them to popular notice. The advantages of classing such compound-staves, according to their wheel or burthen, must be obvious, when we remember

<sup>1</sup> MS. Laud. 40.

such appendage was mostly selected for its *fitness*—whether the fitness consisted in the sentiment conveyed, in the metrical properties of the wheel or burthen, or merely in the associations therewith connected. Sometimes, however, a burthen has entered into so many different combinations, and has been kept so long afloat in popular favour, that its original meaning has been lost, and it has become little more than a string of articulate sounds, tacked to the end of a stave. Still it possessed a certain convenience, inasmuch as it enabled a mixed company to join readily in a chorus.

The *bob* is a very short and abrupt wheel or burthen, and it seems to have been borrowed from the Troubadour. The name has been used by some of our classical writers, and—to quiet the fastidious reader—has been sanctioned by Johnson.

The latest expedient, had recourse to for obtaining variety, was to take some well-known stave, and alter the number of accents in certain of its verses. If the number be lessened, a phrase might be borrowed from King James, and the stave, with much convenience, called a *broken* one. When the stave is varied by lengthening one of its verses, it is almost invariably fashioned on the model which Spenser has left us, and therefore may be termed a Spenser-stave. Both broken and Spenser-staves were invented during the latter half of the sixteenth century, and some of their varieties still keep a place, among the favourite combinations of English poetry.

Having said thus much as to the principles which governed the formation of our staves, we may now shortly notice a peculiarity belonging to many of the older ones. In some poems the leading thought or expression with which a stave concludes, is taken up and repeated in the stave succeeding; in others, the staves are independent of each other, but the different portions of each are knit together by a like artifice. Both these kinds of *Iteration* are found in the old poems which Pinkerton published under the titles of *Sir Gawane* and *Sir Galaron*, and *Gawane* and *Gologras*. The stanzas which follow relate part of the interview between

Queen Waynour, the gay lady that called King Arthur husband, and the ghost of her mother—who, by the by,

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With riche dayntes on des : thi drotes<sup>1</sup> are dight  
 And I in danger and doel : in dongon I dwelle  
 Naxte and nedeful : naked on night  
 Ther folo me a ferde : of fendes of helle.  
 They hurle me unhendely : thai harme me in hight ;  
 In bras and in brymston : I bren as a belle,  
 Was never wrought in this world : a wofuller wight.  
 Hit were ful tore any tonge : my torment to telle.  
*Now wil I of my torment : tell or I go*  
 Think hertly on this  
 Fonde to mende thi mys  
 Thou art warned I wys  
 Bewar be my wo

*Wo is we for thi wo* : quod Waynour I wys  
 But one thing wold I wite : if thi wil were.  
 If anyes<sup>4</sup> matens or mas : might mende thi mys.  
 Or any meble on mold : my merthe were the mare.  
 If bedis of bishoppis : might bring the to blisse  
 Or coventes in cloistre : might keen<sup>5</sup> the of care.  
 If thou be my moder : grete wunder hit is  
 That al thi burly body : is brought to be so bare,  
*I bare thee of my body* : what bote is hit I layn ?<sup>6</sup>  
 I brak a solempe vow  
 And no man wist hit but thowe  
 By that token thou trow  
 That sothly I sayn

*Say sothely what may ye saven I wys, &c.*

---

The chief use of Iteration was to bind together the different parts of a compound-stave. Generally, this intertexture of parts was effected by a communion of rime ; but, in certain cases, and especially when the elementary staves rimed continuously, the tie which linked them together was

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<sup>1</sup> [Pinkerton's text is very badly printed. The passage quoted is from stanzas 16 and 17 of the *Awnters of Arthure*, of which a much better text is to be found in Syr Gawayne, ed. Madden (Bannatyne Club), p. 103. Another text is printed in *Three English Metrical Romances*, ed. Robson, p. 7.—W. W. S.]

<sup>2</sup> [An absurd mistake for *dietes*, i. e. diets, meals.—W. W. S.]

seems to have been everyway worthy of the daughter. The ghost is spokeswoman.<sup>1</sup>

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With rich dainties, on dais, thy nobles are furnished,  
 And I in danger and sorrow—in dongeon I dwell—  
 Filthy and hard-driven !—naked !—in night !  
 There follow me a host of fiends from hell !  
 They dash me down cruelly, they torture me toth' height !  
 In gledes<sup>3</sup> and in brimston I burn, like a flame !  
 Was never made, in this world, a more woful wight !  
 It were full hard, for any tongue, my torment to tell—  
 Now will I of my torment tell, ere I go,  
 Think, in heart, of this—  
 Essay to mend thy fault ;  
 Thou art warned in sooth ;  
 Beware by my woe !

Woe is me for thy woe, quoth Waynour, in sooth ;  
 But one thing would I know (if it were thy will)  
 If once [either] matins or mass could mend thy fault,  
 Or any thing on earth—my joy would be the greater—  
 If pray'rs of bishops might bring thee to bliss,—  
 Or convents, with cloyster, might drive from thee thy sorrow.  
 If thou be my mother, great wonder is it,  
 That all thy portly body is brought to be so bare !  
 I bare thee of my body—what boots it I lye ?  
 I brake a solemn vow,  
 And no one wist it but thou,  
 By that token, thou know'st  
 That truely I speak.

Say, truely, what may save thee, &c.

---

this species of Iteration. At the present day we have many compound-staves, the parts of which are (as regards their metre) wholly unconnected ; but in earlier times, when the science of versification was better understood, staves, thus loosely put together, were seldom met with. It seems to

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<sup>1</sup> [The sense is merely *brass*, i. e. molten metal, so frequently mentioned in mediæval descriptions of hell. Moreover, a *belle* means a bell that is being cast, not 'a flame.'—W. W. S.]

<sup>2</sup> [A blunder for *auther*, i. e. either.—W. W. S.]

<sup>3</sup> [Sir F. Madden reads *kore*, i. e. turn (thence from).—W. W. S.]

<sup>4</sup> [To *lagn* is to conceal a thing.—W. W. S.]

have been considered, as essential to their construction, that every part should be *dependent*, so that if one portion of the stave were remembered, it might easily call to mind the rest. The stanzas just quoted have their eight first lines bound together by an *interwoven* rime, and the five last by a *close* rime; but these two divisions of the stave have no other connection between them than is furnished by the Iteration. When the Iteration passed over to the next stave, it served in like manner to aid recitation, and carried the recollection with it a step further in the poem.

The next chapter will be devoted to the staves, which are distinguished by the use of the continuous rime, and the third chapter to the Psalm-staves, or such as have been formed from the Psalm-metres, by the introduction of the mixed rime. The fourth chapter will treat of the Wheel and Burthen; and the fifth of the Ballet-staves, or of those metrical combinations which were introduced into English poetry with the ballets, the roundles, and other similar inventions of the foreigner. The broken-stave will furnish materials for the sixth chapter, and the Spenser-stave for the seventh; and, in the last, we will briefly review the whole subject, and throw a rapid glance over the changes, through which our language and our literature have passed.

## CHAPTER II.

## STAVES WITH CONTINUOUS RIME

are to be found in all the older poems of the Welsh and Irish, and were, doubtless, familiar to all the other branches of the great Celtic family. The length of the stave seems to have been chiefly regulated by that of the period; and in some of the Welsh poems (probably written in the sixth century) it varies from three or four to as many as twelve or even fifteen verses.

The earlier Romance poems have, in like manner, a continuous rime, varying at uncertain intervals. For the most part each period has its own peculiar rime; but, in some poems, the rime overrides several sentences, and even changes in the midst of a period. These staves of uncertain length were well known to the Romance dialect, which was spoken at the English court during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. In some cases, the same rime is repeated as many as twenty or thirty times—the common endings *on, ence, ent, &c.* affording great facilities, in heaping together these riming terminations. The poems, in which we claim an interest, always, I believe, consist of alexandrines; but the poem on Boethius—the oldest poem in the Romance of *Oc*, which has come down to us—is written in verses of five accents.

Final rime, when first introduced into English poetry, was sparingly used in detached couplets—the correspondence being confined to the final syllables of the two sections. Occasionally we have four or five of these riming couplets occurring together; and, in Conybeare's riming poem,<sup>1</sup> they are often furnished with the *same* rime. In

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<sup>1</sup> See p. 389.

some poems, also, written in the metre of four accents (as in the Biblical history, quoted by Warton<sup>1</sup>) we have the verses riming sometimes two, sometimes three, four, five, or even six together. But neither in this, nor in the Anglo-Saxon poem, does the rime exercise that control over the stops, which is essential to the construction of a well-defined stave.

In some of our loose and tumbling Psalm-metres, I think I have met with instances where the rime was continued through an uncertain number of verses, and, at the same time, governed the punctuation. I have, however, lost my references, and cannot readily call to mind any instance of such a combination.

When final rime was first applied to the Latin "rhythmus," staves both of a simple and of a complicated structure

---

Suet|e ie|su : king | of blys|se  
 Myn huer|te lou|e : min huer|te lis|se  
 Thou | art suet|e : myd | ywis|se  
 Wo | is him| : that the | shal mis|se

Suet|e ie|su : min huer|te lyht|  
 Thou | art day| : without|e nyht|  
 Thou 3eu|e me strein|the : and | eke myht|  
 For|te lou|ien : the | aryht, &c. . . .

Swet|e ie|su : lou|erd myn|  
 My lyf | myn huer|te : al | is thin|  
 Vndo | myn her|te : and liht | ther yn|  
 And wit|e me| : from fen|des engyn, | &c.<sup>2</sup>

---

Among our tumbling Psalm-metres we often find staves of four verses riming continuously. Staves of a like kind were used in several of the Latin "rhythmi;" and, as the flow of our English verses is generally too loose to afford any safe test, it is hard to say on which of these Latin forms the English staves were modelled. The writers of

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<sup>1</sup> Hist. of Engl. Poetry, vol. i. p. 19 [or ii. 35, ed. 1871]. See also Bennet MS. R. 11. [The allusion is to The Story of Genesis and Exodus, ed. Morris, 1865. Warton's remarks are misleading; for the riming of many lines together is rare, except just at the beginning of the poem.—W. W. S.]

had long been familiar. In some of the shorter poems the same rime was continued from the beginning to the end ; but, far the most part, the correspondence between the final syllables varied in each stave. Hence were obtained staves of a definite length, that rimed continuously, and exercised the requisite control over the punctuation. Many of these staves have been imitated in the modern versification of Europe.

The favourite combination of the Iambic Dimeter was the stave of four verses ; and its "rhythmus" was often furnished with the continuous rime. The following hymn, which was probably written at the close of the thirteenth century, was, no doubt, intended as an imitation of such riming rhythmus. Its cadence seems to have been a good deal influenced by that of our native rhythms.

---

Sweet Jesu ! king of bliss  
 Mine heart's love, mine heart's joy,  
 Thou art sweet, in very sooth  
 Wo is him, that shall miss thee !

Sweet Jesu ! mine heart's light,  
 Thou art day, all without night !  
 Give thou me strength, and eke might  
 Thee for to love aright ! &c.

Sweet Jesu ! my Lord !  
 My life, mine heart all is thine,  
 Change [Open] mine heart, and light therein—  
 And loose me from the Devil's snare.

---

the songs noticed in bk. iii. ch. 6,<sup>3</sup> seem to have had in their view the rhythmus of Walter Mapes ;<sup>4</sup> and I suspect this favourite combination was floating before many of our poets, in cases where the looseness of the rhythm does not enable us to trace the imitation.

Towards the close of the sixteenth century a stave came

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<sup>3</sup> Harl. 2253. There are fifteen stanzas in all. [Printed in T. Wright's *Specimens of Lyric Poetry*, p. 57 ; and in K. Bökdeker's edition of MS. Harl. 2253, p. 191.]

<sup>4</sup> See pp. 513, 514.

<sup>4</sup> See p. 475.



into fashion, which consisted of three verses, each of five accents. It kept its popularity nearly a century, but I cannot satisfactorily trace its origin. Ben Jonson has used it more than once. [See *An Epistle to a Friend*, in *Underwoods*, poem 55.]

Though you sometimes proclaim me too severe,  
Rigid and harsh, which is a drug austere  
In friendship, I confess, but, dear friend, hear.

Little know they, that professe amitie  
And seeke to scant her comely libertie,  
How much they lame her in her propertie.

And lesse they know, who being free to use  
That friendship, which no chance but love did chuse,  
Will unto license that fair leave abuse, &c.

The affecting elegy, written by Charles, and preserved by Burnet, may furnish us with another specimen.<sup>1</sup>

Nature and law by thy divine decree  
(The only root of righteous royalty)  
With this dim diadem invested me ;

With it the sacred scepter, purple robe,  
The holy unction, and the royal globe——  
Yet am I levell'd with the life of Job !

---

Ichot a burde in a bour : ase beryl so bryht  
Ase saphyr in seluer : semly on syht  
Ase iaspe the gentil : that lemith with lyht  
Ase gernet in golde : and ruby wel ryht  
Ase onycle he ys on : yholden on hyht  
Ase diamaunder the dere : in day when he is dyht  
He is coral ycuod : with cayser and knyht  
Ase emeraude amorewen : this may haveth myht  
The myht of the margarite : haveth this maj mere  
For charbocle ich here chos : bi chyn and by chere.

Hire rode is ase rose : that red is on rys  
With lilye white leres : lossom he is  
The primerole he passeth : the peruenke of pris  
With alisaundre thareto : ache and anys

---

<sup>1</sup> [Printed in *Percy's Reliques of Ancient Poetry*.—W. W. S.]

The fiercest furies, that do daily tread  
Upon my grief, my grey discrowned head,  
Are those that owe my bounty for their bread, &c.

But, sacred Saviour, with thy words I woo  
Thee to forgive, and not be bitter to  
Such as, thou knowst, do not know what they do !

Augment my patience, nullify my hate,  
Preserve my issue, and inspire my mate,  
Yet, though we perish, bless this church and state !

The *compound* staves which rimed continuously were, for the most part, formed on a very simple plan. Certain verses, varying in number from four to eight, took the same final rime, and a couplet furnished with a different rime shut in the stave——*iteration* being employed to bind the two parts together. The following song was written about the year 1300. It is curious as a store-house of amatory compliment, from which many a gallant seems afterwards to have drawn his commonplace. [See MS. Harl. 2253, fol. 63 ; printed in T. Wright's *Specimens of Lyric Poetry*, p. 25, and in Bøddeker's edition of MS. Harl. 2253, p. 145.]

---

I wot a bride in a bower, as the beryl bright ;  
As saphire in silver, seemly to sight ;  
As the gentle jasper, that gleameth with light ;  
As garnet in gold, and ruby so rightful ;  
She's one like the onyx, holden on high ;  
As the precious diamond (in the day when she's dight)  
She's [known as] coral with Kaiser and knight ;  
As emerald in the morn, this maiden hath might ;  
The might of the margerite (pearl) hath this maid also ;<sup>1</sup>  
For carbuncle I [would have] selected her, for her chin and her complexion.

Her hew is as rose, that red is on branch ;  
With lily-white skin, lovesome is she ;  
The primrose she passeth, the pink<sup>2</sup> of price,  
With alisaunder also, the ache [i. e. parsley], and the aniseed ;

---

<sup>1</sup> [Rather, this famous maid.—W. W. S.]

<sup>2</sup> [Not pink, but *periwinkle*.—W. W. S.]

Coynte ase columbine : such hire cunde ys  
 Glad under gore : in gro and in grys  
 He is blosme opo[n] bleo : brihtest under bis  
 With celydoyne and sauge : ase thou thiself sys  
 That syht upon that semly : to blis he is broht  
 He is solsecle : to sanne ys forsoht.

He is papeiai in pyn : that beteth me my bale  
 Thou trewe tortle in a tour : y telle the mi tale  
 He is thrustle thyuen ant thro : that singeth in sale  
 The wilde laveroc ant wolc : ant the wode wale  
 He is faucoun in friht : derne[st] in dale  
 Ant with eueruch a gome : glade[st] in gale  
 From weye he is wisist : into Wyrhale  
 Hire nome is in a note : of the nyhtegale  
 In annote is hire nome : nempneth hit non  
 Whose ryht redeth : rounne to Johon.

The next stave likens the favourite lady to the various delicacies of the table; and the last to different heroes of romance, the song ending with the line [gentil ase ionas he ioyeth with Ion]—

Gentle as Jonas, she joyeth with Jon.

Hence it is clear the poet's name was *John*; and his lady's is just as clearly *Annot*, and not Joan, as Warton strangely surmises. It may also be well to inform the reader that all this alliterative jingle was not manufactured for the occasion, but consists, for the most part, of favourite cor-

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<sup>1</sup> "Under gore," "in gro and in gris," and "under bise," are common phrases in our old English poems, used for the purposes of generalization—just as the Anglo-Saxon used the phrases, *under the heaven*, *under the welkin*, *on mold* (that is, on earth), and others of the same kind. They show a more artificial state of society, inasmuch as they all refer to articles of dress. The word *gore* is still well-known to the seamstress, and means the triangular piece of cloth, or linen, which is wanted to complete the *fork*, or interior angles of a vestment; *gro* and *gris* are different kinds of fur; and *bise* is a kind of cloth. I believe no other than our common baize. [Not so; *bis* is Lat. *byssus*; but *baize*, formerly spelt *bayes*, is merely the pl. of *bay*, in the sense of bay-coloured cloth, the etymology being from Low Lat. *badius*, brown. The words are therefore perfectly distinct.—W.W.S.]

Skilful as the columbine, such her nature is ;  
 Gladsome under wede, in gro and in gris<sup>1</sup>  
 She's a blossom in colour, the brightest under baize,<sup>1</sup>  
 With celedony and sage, as thou thyself seest ;  
 He that looks upon that seemly one, to bliss is he brought,  
 He is the sunflow'r, that to the sun is drawn.<sup>2</sup>

She's popinjay that in pain : assuageth my sorrow,  
 [Thou] true turtle, in a tower, [I tell thee my tale] ;  
 She is throstle, [well-grown and strong], that singeth in hall ;  
 The wild lark and——? and the wood-wele ;  
 She is falcon, in frith, most secret in the dale,  
 And with every man most gladsome in song ;  
 From Wey she is wisest unto Wyrhale ;<sup>3</sup>  
 Her name is in a note of the nightingale,  
 In a note is her name—let no one name it<sup>4</sup>—  
 Whoso readeth rightly, let him run<sup>5</sup> to Johan.

responses, which long kept their place in our literature. The “rightfulnesse of the rubie,” “the might of the marguerite,” &c. were common alliterations, and probably owed their rise to the superstitions of our ancestors. Both Anglo-Saxon and old English MSS. are still extant, which treat of the virtues of herbs, precious stones, &c.

Minot, the northern poet, who sang the triumphs of our third Edward, often used these compound staves ; but the transcriber of the MS. has, in some cases, written the sections as distinct verses. The following staves are part of one of his songs against the Scotch.

<sup>2</sup> [Dr. Guest prints *sunne*. The MS. has *sanne*. The sense is obscure.—W.W.S.]

<sup>3</sup> That is, wisest from *Wey-hill* in Wiltshire to *Wirral* in Cheshire.

<sup>4</sup> [Rather, “No one names it ;” or, “does no one name it ?” *Nempneth* is not an imperative or subjunctive form.—W. W. S.]

<sup>5</sup> [Dr. Guest prints *ronne* ; but the right reading is *roune*, i.e. “let him whisper (it) to John.”—W. W. S.]

<sup>6</sup> [In MS. Cotton, Galba E. ix ; printed in *Political Songs and Poems* relating to English History, edited by T. Wright in 1859 ; vol. i. p. 61.]

Skottes out of Berwik : and of Abirdene  
 At the Bannokburn : war 3e to kene  
 Thare slogh 3e many sakles : als it was sene  
 And now has king Edward : wroken it i wene  
 It es wroken i wene : wele wurth the while  
 War 3it with the Skottes : for thai er ful of gile.

Rughfute riving : now kindels thi care.  
 Bere bag with thi boste : thi biging is bare,  
 Fals wretche and forsworn : whider wiltou fare  
 Busk the unto brig : and abide thare  
 Thare wretche saltou won : and wery the while  
 Thi dwelling in Donde : es done for thy gile.

Sometimes Minot gives *eight* verses to the stave—the six first, of course, taking the same rime. In the song from which we have quoted, the second rime remains unchanged throughout. As the strain upon the memory is thus lessened, there is less necessity for the *iteration* to bind together the two portions of the stave; and, in the fifteenth century, it was generally omitted. Dunbar's expostulation with his patron, the fair-spoken and heartless profligate James the Fourth, may afford us an example.<sup>1</sup>

The wav | erand warl | dis : wretch | ednes |,  
 The fail | yeand and fruit | less : bis | sines |,  
 The mis | pent tyme | : the ser | vice vaine |,  
 For | to consid | er : is | ane pane |.

The slyd | and joy | : the glaid | ness schort |,  
 The fein | yeid luif : the fals | confort |,  
 The sweet | abayd | : the slicht | full train |,  
 For | to consid | er : is | ane pane |.

The sug | urit mouth | is : with mynd | is thairfra |  
 The fig | urit speiche | : with face | is tua  
 The ples | and toun | is : with hart | is unplane |  
 For | to consid | er : is | ane pane |, &c.

At later periods staves were often made up of couplets,

[<sup>1</sup> See Dunbar's Poems, ed. Laing, i. 204.]

Scots out of Berwick and of Aberdeen,  
 At Bannockburn were ye too fierce,  
 There slew ye many, without guilt, as t'was seen,  
 And now has King Edward aveng'd it, I ween.  
 It is avenged, I ween, well worth the while !  
 Yet be ye ware of the Scots, for they are full of guile.

Roughfoot Riveling,<sup>1</sup> now kindles thy sorrow !  
 Bear-bag,<sup>2</sup> with thy boast, thy dwelling is bare !  
 False wretch and forsworn, whither wilt thou fare ?  
 Get ye unto the bridge, and abide ye there—  
 There, wretch, shalt thou won, and curse the while,  
 Thy dwelling in Dundee is lost through thy guile, &c.

---

which were (as regarded their metre) wholly unconnected with each other. The only property of a stave, these slovenly combinations could boast of, was the control they exercised over the punctuation, and even this was sometimes denied them. Waller closes his Panegyric "to my Lord Protector," with the following lines—I cannot call them staves.

Illustrious acts high raptures do infuse,  
 And ev'ry conqueror creates a muse.  
 Here, in low strains, your milder deeds we sing ;  
 But there, my Lord, we'll bays and olives bring

To crown your head ; while you in triumph ride  
 O'er vanquish'd nations, and the sea beside ;  
 While all your neighbour-princes unto you,  
 Like Joseph's sheaves, pay reverence, and bow.

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<sup>1</sup> The *riveling* was a brogue of untanned leather worn in Scotland during the fourteenth century. The term was given as a nickname to the Scotch by the well-dressed Englishman, and afterwards (as civilization advanced) was applied by the "tame Scots" to the wild Highlander.

<sup>2</sup> The Scotchman, in a foray, always carried with him a bag of oatmeal.

## CHAPTER III.

## THE PSALM-STAVES

are those combinations of verses, which resulted from the application of the mixed rime to the Psalm-metres. Many of these staves are become familiar to us, from the use which has been made of them in our different versions of the Psalms, but their origin is not of modern date—in our own language they may be traced up to the thirteenth century, and in the Latin to a much higher antiquity.

The hymn on the Epiphany, said to have been written in the ninth century by the German monk Hartman, consists of staves, formed from the riming couplet of the imperfect Trochaic Tetrameter by introducing a sectional rime into each verse.

Tribus signis  
Deo dignis  
Dies ista colitur ;  
Tria signa  
Laude digna  
Cætus hic persequitur.

Stella magos  
Duxit vagos  
Ad præsepe Domini ;  
Congaudentes  
Omnes gentes  
Ejus psallunt nomini, &c.

This, it will be seen, is only a particular kind of the *ryme couee*, or tail-verse, of which we have already spoken.<sup>1</sup> Another kind was obtained by applying the sectional rime to the imperfect *Iambic* tetrameter. It was used in the Romance song, made by one of Leicester's partizans, after the battle of Evesham, A.D. 1265.

---

<sup>1</sup> See p. 570.

Chaunter mestoit mon cuer le *voit* : en un dure language  
 Tut en plorant fust fet le *chaunt* : de nostre duz baronage  
 Qe pur la *pees* si loynz *apres* : se lesserent detrerre—  
 Lur cors *trencher* et *demenbrer* : pur salver Engleterre  
 O<sup>r</sup>e est ocys la flur de *pris* : qe taunt savoit de guere  
 Ly quens Mountfort sa dure *mort* : molt enplorra la terre.<sup>1</sup>

The tail-stave, fashioned on the imperfect Iambic Tetrameter,<sup>2</sup> has been adopted into almost all the languages of Europe. It must have been common in English poetry during the fifteenth century, and, it may be, even at an earlier period. The following stave is taken from one of Wyat's songs, written about the year 1520.<sup>3</sup>

Consent, at laste,  
 Since that thou hast  
 My hart in thie demayne,  
 For service trew,  
 On me to rewe,  
 And reche me love agayne.

The stave here swelled out into six verses is nothing more than two riming Iambic Tetrameters, each of them furnished with a sectional rime. By a similar device other combinations were formed from the stave of four, or even from that of six Tetrameters.

By keeping in mind this origin of the stave we see the reason why, in most cases, the tail-rime remains unchanged. But, as in the original stave the last couplet sometimes takes its own peculiar rime, so, in these staves, the last tail-rime is sometimes *given*, and varies from the others. The celebrated drinking song, for example, in Gammer Gurton's needle [Act ii.], ends every stave with the word *old*.

I cannot eat but little meat,  
 My stomach is not good,  
 But sure I think, that I can drink  
 With him that wears a hood.

<sup>1</sup> [Printed in Political Songs, ed. Wright, p. 125.] We have here one of the few instances afforded by our early literature, of an ill-constructed stanza. It will be seen there is no metrical connection between the first and the second couplets; the third couplet is repeated in every stave, and may, therefore, be independent of the others.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 475. The *lengthening* syllable of the "rhythmus" is generally omitted in our slovenly imitations of this metre.

<sup>3</sup> [Printed in English Poets, ed. Chalmers, ii. 389.]



Though I go bare, take ye no care,  
 I nothing am a-cold,  
 I stuffe my skin so full within  
*Of joly goode ale and old.*

## CHORUS.

Backe and side, go bare, go bare,  
 Both foot and hand, go colde!  
 But, belly, God send thee good ale inoughe,  
 Whether it be new or olde.

I love no roast but a nut-brown toast,  
 And a crab laid in the fire;  
 A little bread shall do me stead,  
 Moche bread I noight desire;  
 No frost, no snowe, no winde, I trow,  
 Can hurte me if I wolde,  
 I am so wrapt, and throwly lapt  
*Of joly good ale and old.*

## CHORUS.

Backe and side, &c.

So, in the Not-browne Maid, both the expostulations of the Gentleman, and the answers of the Lady have their peculiar endings, with which, of course, the last tail-rime must correspond.<sup>1</sup>

## HE [st. 15].

Yet take good heed, for ever I drede  
 That ye coude not sustein  
 The thorney wayes, the depe valeis,  
 The snowe, the frost, the reyn,  
 The colde, the hete; for drye or wete,  
 We must lodge on the playn,  
 And us above no other rove  
 But a brake, bussh, or twayne;  
 Which sone shulde greve you, I beleve,  
 And ye wolde gladly than,  
 That I had too the grene wode goo  
*Alone, a banysshyd man.*

## SHE [st. 16].

Syth I have here ben partynere  
 With you of joy and blysse,  
 I muste also parte of your woo  
 Endure, as reason is;

[<sup>1</sup> Printed in Skeat's Specimens of Eng. Literature, p. 102.]

Yet am I sure of oo plesure,  
 And shortly it is this—  
 That where ye bee, me semeth, perde,  
 I coude not fare amyse—  
 Wythoute more speche, I you beseche,  
 That we were soon agone,  
 For in my mynde, of all mankynde  
*I love but you alone, &c.*

In this poem, which probably dates about the close of the fifteenth century, the first section of the Tetrameter is written as *one* verse. Archbishop Parker, in his version of the Psalms, treats the first section in the same way; but marks its middle pause with a colon, as also the final pause of the original Tetrameter.

To feede my neede :<sup>1</sup> he will me leade  
 To pastures grene and fat :  
 He forth brought me : in libertie  
 To waters delicate : &c.

We sometimes find the same sectional rime applied to both Tetrameters; but to dance in these fetters required no common dexterity, and such cases are but rare.

There is a species of tail-stave, which seems to be formed by a duplication of the first section—such duplicated section riming, and occupying the place of the riming section in the stave, whose properties have been discussed. The following staves are taken from the “Complaint” of the Westphalian monk Bernard. They are based, it will be seen, on the riming couplet of the imperfect Tetrameter.

Canonici, cum cæteris  
 Collegiorum sociis,  
 Mundaniter imbuti,  
 In variis et serico  
 Vestiti vadunt Jericho  
 Mollissimis induti.  
  
 Ne quid eorum corpora  
 Sustineant, vel aspera  
 Tenerrimos offendant,

---

<sup>1</sup> Here we have a rime in the first section—to *feede my neede*; but this correspondence is merely accidental, and not to be found in the other staves.

De pretiosis pellibus  
 Subtilibus et mollibus  
 Camisias emendant, &c.

This stave was a favourite one with our poets during the

---

Len|ten is com|e with lou|e to toun|e  
 With blos|men ant | with brid|des roun|e  
 That al | this blis|se bryng|eth;  
 Day|es-ey|es in | this dal|es  
 Not|es suet|e of nyht|egal|es  
 Uch|<sup>2</sup> foul | song sing|eth. . . .

The ros|e rayl|eth hir|e rod|e  
 The leu|es on | the lyht|e wod|e  
 Wax|en al | with wil|le  
 The mon|e man|deth hir|e bleo|  
 The lil|ie is | los|sum to seo|  
 The fen|yl ant | the fil|le, &c.

---

In this song, besides a loose rhythm, we often find the duplicated sections *lengthened*; but in the next century the structure of the Latin original was still further departed from, and the lengthening syllable of the tail-verse is often wanting. Chaucer's Rime of Sir Thopas affords us many examples of this slovenly versification.

A variety of this stave, fashioned on the common stave of four Tetrameters riming continuously, was well known in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Though it does not

---

Whon he was brouht uppon his stede  
 He sprong as sparkle doth of glede  
 For wraththe and for envye  
 Alle that he hutte he made hem blede  
 He ferde as he wolde a wede  
 Mahoun help he gan crye

---

<sup>1</sup> [Printed in Wright's Specimens of Lyric Poetry, p. 43; Morris and Skeat, Specimens of Early English, p. 48; Béddeker's edition of MS. Harl. 2253, p. 164.—W. W. S.]

<sup>2</sup> *Uch* should certainly have been written *uche*.

thirteenth century; at the close of which was probably written the song<sup>1</sup> that furnishes us with the following extract,—

---

Spring is come with love to town,<sup>2</sup>  
With blossoms and with song of birds,  
That all this bliss bringeth—  
Daisies in the dales!  
Sweet notes of nightingales!  
Each bird singeth song.

The rose she putteth on her colour,  
The leaves in the [bright] wood  
Spring forth all with good-will!  
The moon recovereth [sends forth] her look!  
The lily it is lovesome to see,  
The fennel and the fille [i. e. wild thyme].

---

possess facility, it appears to have been a great favourite with the writers of our English romances, many of whom have left us specimens of their skill in the management of this somewhat unwieldy stanza. The extract which follows is taken from a tale of the fourteenth century, called the *King of Tars*<sup>4</sup> [l. 193]. The terrible “Soudan,” it should be prefaced, has been unhorsed by the Christian king, and rescued by his “Sarazins.”

---

When he was brought unto his steed,  
He sprung forth as spark doth from glède,  
For wrath and for disdain;  
All that he hit, he made them bleed,  
He fared as if he would go mad;  
“Help, Mahoun,” gan he cry.

---

<sup>2</sup> *In town, to town*, &c. were well-known poetical phrases, and might be rendered “in or to habitations of men,” &c. The original meaning of the word *town* was homestead.

<sup>4</sup> [Printed in Ritson's *Metrical Romances*, ii. 156.—W. W. S.]

Mony an helm ther was unweved  
 And mony a bacinet tocleved  
 And sadeles mony emptye  
 Men mihte se uppon the feld  
 Moni a kniht ded under scheld  
 Of the cristene cumpaignye.

This stave, it will be seen, has only four riming terminations, the fourth and fifth verses taking the same rime as the first and second, but most staves, belonging to this class, have *five*. Staves of a similar kind were fashioned on the imperfect *Trochaic Tetrameter*. They were used by Lawrence, Prior of Durham, in the first half of the twelfth century, and afterwards by Walter Mapes, to whom the following are ascribed in an Oxford MS.<sup>1</sup>

Ita dicunt Cardinales,  
 Ita solent dii carnales  
 In primis allicere;  
 Sic instillant fel draconis,  
 Et in fine lectionis  
 Cogunt bursam vomere.

Tales regunt Petri navem!  
 Tales habent Petri clavem,  
 Ligandi potentiam!  
 Hi nos docent, sed indocti,  
 Hi nos docent, et nox nocti  
 Indicat scientiam!

Cardinales, ut prædixi,  
 Novo jure crucifixi  
 Vendunt patrimonium;  
 Foris Petrus, intus Nero,  
 Intus lupi, foris vero  
 Sicut agni ovium. &c.

This was, doubtless, the model which Shakespeare had in view when he wrote the song,

Orpheus with | his lute | made trees |  
 And | the moun|taine-tops, | that freeze |,  
 Bow | themselves |, when he | did sing |;  
 To | his mu|sicke plants | and flow|ers

<sup>1</sup> Bodl. MS. Digby 4. [See Poems of W. Mapes, ed. T. Wright, p. 220.]

Many a helm was there unlaced,  
 And many a *basinet* was cleft,  
 And saddles many empty'd;  
 Men might see, upon the field,  
 Many a knight dead under shield,  
 Of the Christian company.

Ev | er sprung |, as sunne | and show | ers  
 There | had made | a las | ting spring |.

Every thing that heard him play,  
 Ev'n the billows of the sea,  
 Hung their heads, and then lay by;  
 In sweet musicke is such art,  
 Killing care and grieve of heart,  
 Fall asleepe, or hearing dye!

*Henry VIII. 3. 2. 3.*

Staves of a similar construction were formed on the verse of six accents. They were used in the elegy, written A.D. 1308, upon Sir Piers of Brimingham, "a noble champion against the Irish." [See MS. Harl. 913, fol. 50.]

An-other thing al-so  
 To Yrismen he was fo  
 That wel wide whare  
 Ever he rode aboute  
 With streinth to hunt ham ute  
 As hunter doth the hare.

For whan hi wend best,  
 In wildernis hab rest,  
 That no man ssold ham see  
 Than he wold drive a quest  
 Anon to har nest  
 In stid ther hi wold be.

Of slep he wold ham wake  
 For ferdnis he wold quake  
 And fond to skulk awai  
 For the hire of har bedde  
 He toke har heuid to wedde  
 And so he tazt ham plai, &c.

—Another thing also  
 To Irishmen he was foe,  
 That were full widely spread,  
 Ever he rode about  
 With strength to hunt them out,  
 As hunter doth the hare.

For when they ween'd best  
 In the wild to have rest,  
 That no man should them see,  
 Then would he drive a *quest*  
 Anon to their nest,  
 In the place where they'd be.

From sleep he would them wake,  
 For terror would they quake,  
 And try to skulk away;  
 For the hire of their bed  
 He took their heads in pledge,  
 And so he taught them play! &c.

In some few cases we find the first section twice repeated,

Ye men of Galylee,  
 Wherfor mervelle ye?

Q Q

Hevyn behold, and se  
 How Jesus up can weynde,  
 Unto his fader fre;  
 Where he syttes in majeste,  
 Withe hym ay for to be,  
 In blys withoutten ende!

*Townley Myst. Ascencio; p. 300.*

The general form of this stave had been anticipated in the tail-stave of the *lay* and the *virelay*. One of these little poems has been [wrongly] attributed to Chaucer, and by Isip is termed a "ballade."

Alone   walking	}	all des olate ,
In thought   plaining		
And sore   sighing		
Me re membring	}	both ear ly and late ,
Of my   living  ,		
My death   wishing		
Inf fortunate	}	out of measure
So is my fate,		
That wote ye what ?		
My life I hate, &c.		

It will be seen that the tail-rime of one stave becomes the sectional rime of the following one. This peculiarity seems to be the chief characteristic of the English *virelay*.

Another set of staves were formed from the Psalm-metres by means of the interwoven rime. One of the oldest of these appears to have been based on the stave of four imperfect Iambic Tetrameters riming continuously. It was

The dryv | ers thor | owe the wood | es went |  
 For | to reas | the dear |;  
 Bo | men byck | arte vppone | the bent |,  
 With ther | browd ar | os cleare |  
 Then | the wyld thor | owe the wood | es went  
 On ev | ery syde |<sup>3</sup> shear |  
 Grea | hondes thor | owe the grev | is glent |  
 For | to kyll | thear dear |.

*Lines 10-13.*

<sup>1</sup> [Another version is given in Percy's *Reliques of Ancient Poetry*, Series II. bk. 1; and a third in Morley's *Shorter Eng. Poems*, p. 75. The author is Robert Henryson.—W. W. S.]

used in one of those satires against the Romish clergy, preserved by Flacius.

Hones | ta mun | di domina |  
 Frangen | do leg | is ju | ra  
 Virtu | tum per | dit om | nia |  
 Tribu | ta sol | vens du | ra ;  
 Fit or | bis vel | ut fæm | ina |  
 Et mer | etrix | impu | ra  
 Ex hoc | viles | cit gem | ina |  
 Eccle | siæ | censu | ra.

This stave appears to have been a great favourite with our countrymen during the fifteenth century, at the close of which was written the old song,<sup>1</sup> beginning—

Robene sat in gud grene hill	Robin sat on the good green hill,
Keipand a flok of fie	Keeping a flock of sheep,
Merry Makyne said him till	Merry Makyn said to him,
Robene thow rew on me,	"Robin, rue on me,
I haif the luvit lowd and still	I have lov'd thee, in speech and
Ther yeiris two or thre	silence,
My dule in dern bot gif thow dell	These years two or three,
Doubtles bot dreid I de.	My secret sorrow unless thou 'suage
	Doubtless in sooth I die."

In the same stanza there is reason to believe was originally written the well-known ballad of Chevy Chase; and, amid all the additions and blunders of transcribers, we may still, in many parts, very clearly trace this metrical arrangement. The ballad was in all probability composed early in the fifteenth century.<sup>2</sup>

The drivers through the wood went  
 For to rouse the deer,  
 Bowmen hover'd upon the bent (upland)  
 With their broad arrows clear,  
 Then the wild deer through the woods went  
 On every side full many [*or, severally*]  
 Greyhounds through the groves glanced  
 For to kill these deer.

<sup>2</sup> [Carefully printed from the Ashmole MS. (a corrupt but unique copy) in my *Specimens of English*.—W. W. S.]

<sup>3</sup> When the ballad was written, *syde* was in all probability a dissyllable.



At the laste | a squyar of Northom | berlonde |  
 Lokyde at | his hand | full ny |  
 He was war | ath the dough | etie Dog | las commynge |  
 With him | a mygh | tte meany |  
 Both with spear | bylle |<sup>1</sup> and brande |  
 Yt was a myght | ti sight | to se |  
 Hard | yar men | both off hart | nor hande |  
 Wear not | in cris | tiantie |

*Lines 20-23.*

The Dog | glas par | tyd his ost | in thre |  
 Lyk a cheffe | cheften | off pryde |  
 With su | ar speares | of mygh | tte tre |  
 The cum in | on eu | ery syde |.  
 Thrughe | our Yng | glyshe arch | ery |  
 Gave man | y a wounde | full wyde |  
 Man | y a dough | ete the garde | to dy |  
 Whych gan | yde them | no pryde |.

The Yng | lyshe men | let thear bo | ys be |  
 And pulde | owt brandes | that wer brighte |  
 It | was a hev | y syght | to se |  
 Bryght swordes | on bas | nites lyghte |  
 Thor | owe ryche male | and myn | e ye ple |  
 Many sterne | the strocke | done streght |  
 Man | y a freyke | that was | full fre |  
 Ther vn | dar foot | dyd lyght |.

At last | the Dug | las and the Per | se met |  
 Lyk to cap | tayns of myght | and of mayne |  
 The swapte | togeth | er tyll the | both swat |  
 With swordes | that wear |<sup>2</sup> of fyn | myllan |  
 Thes worth | e freck | ys for | to fyght |  
 Therto | the wear | full fayne |  
 Tyll | the bloode owte | off thear bas | netes sprete |  
 As eu | er dyd heal | or ran |

*Lines 56-67.*

There is another interwoven stave of eight verses, in which every verse takes four accents. Whether it is founded on one of the Psalm-metres however may admit of doubt. In some cases the rhythm is very precise, and

<sup>1</sup> In Hearne's copy [and in the MS.] it is *brylly*—should it not be *berne*?

<sup>2</sup> A *basinet* was a light kind of helmet.

<sup>3</sup> A *freck* was a common word in our northern dialect, and meant a gall-daring fellow.

At the last, a squire of Northumberland  
 Looked under his hand full nigh,  
 He was ware of the doughty Douglas coming,  
 With him a mighty meiny (following),  
 Both with spear, bill, and brand,  
 'Twas a mighty sight to see!  
 Hardier men both of heart or hand  
 Were not in Christendom.

The Douglas parted his host in three,  
 Like a great chieftain of pride;  
 With sure spears of mighty tree  
 They came in on ev'ry side;  
 Through our English archery  
 They gave many a wound full wide,  
 Many a doughty one they made to die—  
 Which gained them no pride.

The Englishmen let their bows be,  
 And pull'd out brands that were bright,  
 It was a heavy sight to see  
 Bright swords on bas'nets<sup>2</sup> light!  
 Through rich mail and manoply  
 Many a stern one they struck down straight,  
 Many a freck,<sup>3</sup> that was full free,  
 There under foot did fall.

At last the Douglas and the Percy met,  
 Like to Captains of might and main;  
 They swapt together, till they both sweat,  
 With swords that were of fine Milan.  
 These worthy champions for to fight—  
 Thereto were they full fain!  
 Till the blood out of their bas'nets burst  
 As ever did hail or rain, &c.

---

agrees with that of the full Iambic Tetrameter; but is it certain this rhythmus<sup>5</sup> was known in the middle ages, and have we any English metre that corresponds with it?<sup>6</sup> These questions must be answered in the affirmative, be-

---

<sup>2</sup> The words *that wear* are probably an addition by the transcriber. Our present copy of the poem is certainly a very corrupt one.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 474.

<sup>6</sup> See p. 514.

fore we can pronounce the following to be one of the

---

When Alexander oure king wes dede  
 That Scotland led in luwe and le  
 Away wes sons of ale and brede  
 Of wyne and wax of gamyn and gle  
 Oure gold wes changyd into lede  
 Cryst borne into virgynyte  
 Succour Scotland and remede  
 That stad is in perplexyte.

---

As Alexander died in 1285, this stave cannot be of much later date. About the same period too, an interwoven stave of *four* verses was common, each verse being provided with four accents as in the stave just quoted. But it may be questioned whether such a combination be anything but the stave of four Iambic Dimeters, furnished with the interwoven instead of the continuous rime, and I shall therefore not stop to give examples.

The common interwoven staves of four, which were founded on the Psalm-metres, were certainly of later growth than the interwoven staves of eight verses. The former, however, must have been well known, and familiar, during the fifteenth century, to which period, indeed, we can trace many of our common ballads; and, during the last three centuries, they have been by far the most popular staves in our language.

One of their varieties, founded on the "short metre," must, I think, have originated in the last century, for, though in the sixteenth this metre sometimes split its verses, I do not remember any case where it took the interwoven rime.

To keep the lamp alive,  
 With oil we fill the bowl;

---

<sup>1</sup> [Printed in Wyntoun's Chronicle, ed. Macpherson, i. 401, and ed. Laing: 266.—W. W. S.]

<sup>2</sup> See p. 521.

Psalm-staves. It is part of an elegy on Alexander the Third, which has been preserved by Wynton.<sup>1</sup>

---

When Alexander our king was dead,  
That Scotland led in love and law,  
Away went luck of ale and bread,  
Of wine, and wax, of game, and glee ;  
Our gold was changed into lead ;  
Christ ! born in virginity,  
Succour Scotland, and restore,  
That fix'd is in perplexity !

---

'Tis water makes the willow thrive,  
And grace that feeds the soul.

The Lord's unsparing hand  
Supplies the living stream,  
It is not at our own command,  
But still deriv'd from Him.

*Cowper, Olney Hymns, 63.*

Among the many varieties, to which the hacknied device of *repetition* gave birth, some of the earliest were obtained by repeating the first verse. The following stave, which may date soon after the year 1200, is quoted in one of Archbishop Langton's sermons, and applied to the mystical perfections of the virgin !

Bel | e Aliz | matin | leva |  
Sun | cors ves | ti et | para |  
Enz | un ver | ger sen | entra |  
Cink | fluret | tes y | truva |  
Un | chapel | et fet | en a |  
De | rose | fluri | e  
Pur | deu tra | hez vus | en la |  
Vus | ki ne am | ez mi | e.

The following English stave, which was written in the same century, has fewer repetitions.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> [Printed in Wright's *Specimens of Lyric Poetry*, p. 94 ; and in Böttdeker's edition of MS. Harl. 2253, p. 218.—W. W. S.]

As y me rod this ender day  
 By grene wode to seche play  
 Mid herte y thohte al on a may  
 Suetest of alle thinge  
 Lythe and ich ou telle may  
 Al of that suete thinge.

By means of a similar device Michael of Kildare—the oldest *English* poet that Ireland can boast of—obtained a

Swet | ie | sus hend | and fre |  
 That was | i straw3t | on rod | e tre |  
 Nowth | e and eu | er mid | us be |  
 And | us schild | fram sin | ne  
 Let | thou no3t | to hel | le te |  
 Thai | that bith | her in | ne  
 So bri3t | e of ble | thou hir | e me |  
 Hop | pe of al | le man kyn | ne  
 Do | us i se | the trin | ite |  
 And heu | ene rich | e to win | ne.

This world | -is lou | e is gon | awai |  
 So dew | on gras | se in som | eris dai |  
 Few | ther beth | weil | awai |  
 That lou | ith god | dis lor | e  
 Al | we beth | iclung | so clai |  
 We | schold rew | that sor | e ;  
 Prince | and king | what wen | ith thai |  
 To lib | be eu | ir mor | e  
 Leu | eth 3ur plai | and cri | eth ai |  
 Ie | su crist | thin or | e, &c.

This sang wro3t a frere  
 Iesus crist be is socure  
 Louerd bring him to the toure  
 Frere Michel Kyldare  
 Shild him fram helle boure  
 Whan he sal hen fare  
 Leuedi flur of al honour  
 Cast a wei is care  
 Fram the schoure of pinis sure  
 Thou sild him her and thare.

*Amen.*

The rhythm of Michael's verse was certainly meant to

As I rode, the bygone day,  
 By green wood to seek me play,  
 In heart I thought all on a maid,  
     Sweetest of all things,  
 Listen, and I may tell to you  
     All of that sweet creature.

---

**new variety from the common interwoven stave of eight verses.** [See MS. Harl. 913, fol. 9.]

---

Sweet Jesu, fair and free,  
 That wast y-stretch'd on the rood-tree,  
 Now and ever with us be,  
     And save us from sin!  
 Let thou not to hell depart  
     Those, that be herein;  
 Thou—so bright of look!—hear me,  
     Hope of all mankind!  
 Make us to see the Trinity,  
     And heaven's realm to win.

This world's love is gone away,  
 Like dew on grass in summer-day;  
 Few there be—welaway!—  
     That love God's lore;  
 We be all y-bound to earth,  
     We must rue that sorely;  
 Prince and king—what ween they?  
     To live for evermore?  
 Leave ye your play, and cry ye ay,  
     "Jesu Christ, thy mercy!" &c.

This song a Friar made,  
 Jesu Christ be his succour!  
 Lord, bring him to thy tow'r!  
     Friar Michael of Kildare—  
 Save him from Hell's abode,  
     When he shall fare hence;  
 Lady! flow'r of all honour,  
     Cast away his care;  
 From the show'r of pains so bitter,  
     Save thou him, here and there.

---

be the same as that of the Romance-stave, last-quoted—

that is, as the favourite cadence of Walter Mapes;<sup>1</sup> the rhythm of the other stave was just as clearly meant for that of the imperfect Iambic Tetrameter. It will be seen, Michael introduces two sectional rimes into his four last verses. This may possibly entitle his stave to rank with a class, whose properties we have yet to consider, and which I would call the *mized* staves.

The mixed staves result from the introduction into the same combination of verses, of both interwoven and tail-rime, or from the *partial* application of one of them. They were once extremely numerous, and even at the present day are far from uncommon.

In the well-known song, called Robin Goodfellow,<sup>2</sup> which has been attributed to Jonson, the first four verses take the interwoven rime, and the remainder of the stave the tail-rime. The rhythm may possibly be based on that of the imperfect Trochaic Tetrameter;<sup>3</sup> but, if so, is a very loose imitation of it.

Betuen | e Mersh | ant Au | eril |  
 When spray | bigin | neth to spring | e  
 The lut | el foul | hath hir | e wyl |  
 On hyr | e lud | to syn | ge  
 Ich libbe in loue longinge <sup>4</sup>  
 For sem | lokest | of al | le thing | e  
 He may me blisse bringe <sup>5</sup>  
 Icham | in hir | e baundoun |  
 An hen | dy hap | ichab | be yhent |  
 Ichot | from heu | ene it is | me sent |  
 From al | le wym | men mi lou | e is lent |  
 Ant lyht | on Al | ysoun | .<sup>6</sup>

In this stanza the final rime of the interwoven stave is used as the sectional rime of the tail-stave; and as the four last lines are the same throughout the song, there is that

<sup>1</sup> See p. 475.

<sup>2</sup> [Printed in Percy's Reliques, Series 3, bk. 2, and in Hazlitt's *Fairy Mythology of Shakespeare*, p. 418.]

<sup>3</sup> See pp. 475, 476.

<sup>4</sup> [Hazlitt prints *whinny*, which seems more likely.—W. W. S.]

Sometimes I meet them like a man,  
 Sometimes an ox, sometimes a hound,  
 And to a horse I turn me can,  
 To trip and trot about them round.

But if, to ride,  
 My backe they stride,  
 More swift than wind away I go—  
 Ore hedge and lands,  
 Thro pools and ponds,  
 I whirry<sup>4</sup> laughing ho! ho! ho!

In the middle of the seventeenth century they generally assigned two *couplets* to the first four lines, as in the famous cavalier song,

Full forty years, this royal crown  
 Has been his father's and his own, &c.

Staves on these models are to be found in almost all the languages of Europe.

The following stanza forms part of a love song which may date about the year 1300. It affords us another specimen of a mixed stave.

Between March and April  
 When the spray beginneth to spring,  
 The little birds have their good will  
 With their notes to sing.  
 I live in yearnings of love  
 For the seemliest of all creatures ;  
 She may bring me bliss,  
 I am at her command.  
 A happy chance I have secured,  
 I wot from heaven it is me sent ;  
 From all women my love is gone  
 And lighted on Alison.

metrical connection of parts, which is necessary to the construction of a well-formed stanza. In the stanzas which follow, this connection is effected by means of the final rime ;

<sup>4</sup> These verses have three, instead of four accents, but the omission is no doubt owing to the blunders of the MS. [Perhaps not ; see the *last* stanza of the poem.—W. W. S.]

<sup>5</sup> [Printed in Wright's *Specimens of Lyric Poetry*, p. 27 ; Morris and Skeat's *Specimens of Early English*, p. 43, &c.—W. W. S.]



the interwoven rime being only applied *partially*. They were written by the old Scotch poet Montgomery,<sup>1</sup> "on the unkindness of his friends when he was in prison."

When men or women visitis me,  
My dolour I disguise  
By outward signs, that nane may see  
Where inward languor lyes.  
Als patient as my pairt appeirs,  
With hevvy hairt, quhen no man heirs,  
For bail then burst I out in teirs,  
Alane, with cairful cryis, &c.

Remembering me quhair I haif bene  
Baith lykit and belov't,  
And now sen syne quhat I haif sene  
My mind may be commov't;  
If any of my dolour dout,  
Let ilkane sey thair time about,  
Perhaps quhose stomok is most stout  
Its patience may be prov't, &c.

---

<sup>1</sup> [See some account of Alexander Montgomery in Hazlitt's ed. of Warton's Hist. of E. Poetry, iii. 266; and see this poem printed in Sibbald's Chronicle of Scottish Poetry, iii. 503. His poems were edited by Laing in 1822.—W. W. S.]

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE BURTHEN, WHEEL, &amp;c.

THE burthen we have already defined<sup>1</sup> as a return of the same words, and the wheel as a return of some peculiar rhythm at the end of each stave. Shakespeare and his contemporaries used the words indifferently; but the distinction here taken may be justified, in some measure, by the collateral meanings which are respectively attached to these terms, and will, probably, be excused from its great convenience.

The repetition of some leading thought or expression, at certain intervals, carries with it, in many cases, advantages so obvious, that we might expect to find the burthen a device well-known and familiarly used in the rhythmical system of every language. I know, however, but of one instance where it is met with in Anglo-Saxon, and as this cannot date earlier than the eleventh century, it may possibly have been suggested by the ecclesiastical chants, in which such repetition was common.

One of the oldest Latin specimens is found in the baptismal hymn, attributed to Fortunatus, bishop of Poitiers, in the sixth century.

Tibi laus perennis auctor  
Baptismatis sacrator,  
Hic fonte passionis  
Das præmium salutis ;  
Nox clara plus et alma  
Quam luna, sol, et astra,

---

<sup>1</sup> See p. 572. It was otherwise called the *foot*. Nares, s.v. *Clown*, quotes—*“Entreth Moros, . . . synging the foote of many songs, as fools were wont.”* Also the *ourturn* (Jamieson), the *holding* or *undersong* (Todd), or the *down* (Cotgrave, s.v. *lerelot*).

Quæ luminum coronâ  
 Reddis diem per umbram ;  
 Tibi laus !

Dulcis, sacrata, blanda  
 Electa, pura, pulchra,  
 Sudans honore mella,  
 Rigans odore chrisma,  
 Tibi laus ! &c.

In the Anglo-Saxon song<sup>1</sup> which follows, the burthen consists of an alliterative couplet; and the sentiment, as it always should do, gives a colouring to the whole poem. The writer would fain lighten the sense of his own misery

We | land him | be wur | man : wræc | es cun | nade  
 An | hydig eorl | : ear | fotha dreag |  
 Hæf | de him | to ge-sith | the : sor | ge and long | ath  
 Win | ter ceal | de wræc | e : we | an oft | onfond |  
 Sith | than hin | e nith | -had : on ned | e leg | de  
 Swonc | re <sup>4</sup> seon | o-bend | e : on syl | lan mon |  
 Thæs | ofer-eod | e : this | ses swa mæg |.

Bead | o-hil | de ne wæs | : hyr | e broth | ra death |  
 On sef | an swa sár | : swa hyr | e sylf | re thing |  
 Thæt | heo gear | o-lic | e : ongiet | en hæf | de  
 Thæt | heo eac | en wæs | : æf | re ne meah | te  
 Thris | te ge-thenc | an : hu | ymb thæt | accolde  
 Thæs | ofer-eod | e : this | ses swa mæg |.

We | thæt mæth | hilde : mon | ge gefrug | non  
 Wur | don grund | lease : geat | es frig | e  
 Thæt him | seo sorg | -lufu : slæp | eal | le binom |.  
 Thæs | ofer-eod | e : this | ses swa mæg |.

Theod | ric ah | te : thrit | ig win | tra  
 Mær | inga burg | : thæt | wæs mon | egum cuth |.  
 Thæs | ofer-eod | e : this | ses swa mæg |.

<sup>1</sup> [Called "Deor the Scald's Complaint;" printed in Codex Exoniensis, ed. Thorpe, p. 377; and in Grein, i. 249.—W. W. S.].

<sup>2</sup> Welund, the famous smith, was beset in his dwelling by Nithad and his followers, and carried off captive, having been first hamstrung to prevent escape. To revenge himself he entices Nithad's sons to his workahop, and murders them; and having given their sister Beadohild a sleeping-draught, violates her person; he then makes himself wings, and flies from his oppressor. The whole story may be found in the Edda.

by the reflection, that time and endurance have put an end to the misery of others. If the following translation may be trusted, he was the household-bard of the *High Denings*, that is, I take it, of the Danish princes who succeeded Knut; and seems to have lost his place at court, when the Confessor mounted the throne of England.

As is usual with the Exeter MS., the rhythmical dot is very rarely inserted; but each division, ending with the burthen, is written separately. This is, for several reasons, worthy of notice. Most Anglo-Saxon poems run on continuously, page after page, sometimes even to the end, without a break.

---

Welund<sup>2</sup>——— ? tasted of exile;  
 The firm-hearted man hardships bore;  
 He had for comrades sorrow and yearnings—  
 Cold winter-exile!<sup>3</sup> woe did he oft endure,  
 Since Nithad him of force laid low,  
 With failing sinew-tye—hapless man!  
*That he o'ercame—this too may I!*

Nor to Beadohild was her brothers' death  
 At heart so sore, as her own woe,  
 For that she quickly had perceived  
 That she was pregnant; nor ever might she  
 With all her power think, how that should be!  
*That she o'ercame—this too may I!*

We, many of us, have heard, that for Mæthild<sup>5</sup>  
 The Geat's passion was without limit<sup>6</sup>—  
 So that grief's yearning sleep from it wholly took.  
*That he o'ercame—this too may I!*

Theodric<sup>7</sup> held for thirty winters  
 The Mærings' burg—that was to many known.  
*That he o'ercame—this too may I!*

---

<sup>2</sup> See p. 317.

<sup>4</sup> I have never seen this adjective elsewhere. [It is spelt *swancor* in Beowulf, l. 2175; and *swancur* in Ps. 118. 81; see Grein.—W. W. S.]

<sup>6</sup> I know nothing of the story here referred to.

<sup>6</sup> If this line be rightly construed, we should read *friga* instead of *frige*. [i.e. *friga*, nom. pl. = loves, yearnings. Grein takes *frige* to be nom. pl. = wooers, which gives no sense. In the next line, for *it* read *him*.—W. W. S.]

<sup>7</sup> This passage probably alludes to the fable of Theodric's thirty years' exile

We | ge-as | codan : eorm | an-ric | es  
 Wylf | enne | gethoht | : ah | te wid | e.  
 Folc | got | ena ric | es : thaet | was grim | cyning  
 Sæt | secg | monig : sorg | um gebund | en  
 We | an on wen | an : wysc | te geneah | he  
 Thaet | thaes cyn | e-ric | es : o | fer-cum | en war | e.  
 Thaes | ofer-eod | e : this | ses swa mæg | .

Sit | eth sorg | -cearig : sæ | lum bidæl | ed  
 On sef | an sweorc | eth : sylf | um thinc | eth  
 Thaet | sy end | eleas : earf | otha dæl |  
 Mæg thonn | e gethenc | an : thaet | geond thaes wor | uhd  
 Wit | ig dryh | ten : wend | eth geneah | he  
 Eorl | e mon | egum : ar | e gesceaw | ath.  
 Wis | licne blæd | : sum | um we | ana dæl |  
 Thaet ic | bi me syl | fum : sec | gan wil | le  
 Thaet | ic hwil | e was | : heo | -dening | a scop |  
 Dryht | ne dyr | e : me | was deor | noma  
 Ah | te ic fel | a win | tra : folg | ath til | ne  
 Hold | ne hlaf | ord : oth | thaet heor | renda | <sup>2</sup>  
 Nú leoth | -cræftig mon | : lond | -ryht gethah |  
 Thaet | me eor | la hleo | : ær | ge-seal | de  
 Thaes | ofer-eod | e : this | ses swa mæg | .

This song is divided by the burthen into unequal portions; but these, as has been observed, are written separately in the MS. In the next specimen the burthen seems to have been introduced at regular intervals; but the whole is written continuously. It is taken from the Layamon MS.,<sup>5</sup> and forms part of a "lutel sermun," which

Alle bac-biteres : wendet to helle .

Robberes and reueres : and the monquelle .

with the Huns; though such a supposition will not remove every difficulty. In explaining this and other historical or mythical allusions in our Anglo-Saxon poems, we must not pay too much attention to the *later myths* of the Icelandic and the German. Fable overlaid History, and changed her shape, with wonderful facility in those days.

<sup>1</sup> See p. 374, n. 6.

<sup>2</sup> I can only construe this line by supposing *da* a mistake for *ðæt*. If this correction be admitted, we may, I think, infer that *Hoorren* was *Pope Laurence* to the Confessor. But many a hero has been manufactured by our Anglo-Saxon scholars out of an innocent adverb or adjective, and possibly I may be

We have heard tell of Eormanric's  
 Wolfish counsel.<sup>1</sup> Widely he ruled  
 The people of the Gotens realm—grim king was he!  
 Many a soldier sat, wrapt in sorrows,  
 In expectation of woe; strongly wish'd he  
 That the kingdom's woe were over past.  
*That he o'ercame—this too may I!*

He<sup>2</sup> sitteth sorrow-laden, joy-bereaved,  
 In heart he's darken'd—to himself he thinketh  
 That endless must be his portion of hardships.  
 One then may think, that o'er this world  
 The all-wise Lord worketh full diversely;  
 To many a man honour he showeth,  
 A well-order'd prosperity—to some a woe-portion.  
 That I of myself will say;  
 For that I whilom was the High-Denings' bard,  
 Dear to my Lord! My name was *Deor*;  
 Many winters had I a noble following,  
 A faithful Lord—till, that Heorren prevailed.  
 Now the song-skill'd man the land<sup>4</sup> hath gotten  
 Which erst on me bestow'd the earl's protector!  
*That he<sup>3</sup> o'ercame—this too may I!*

---

was probably written soon after the year 1200. In this sermon there are two or three changes of metre; and, after several couplets in the verse of four accents, the preacher, all at once, changes his subject, and dashes off in the following measure.

---

All backbiters wend to hell;  
 Robbers and reivers, and the manslayer;

---

fashioning a poet of no better materials. [Both Grein and Thorpe take the name to be *Heorrenda*, the verb being *gethah*.—W. W. S.]

<sup>2</sup> That is, Eormanric's soldier.

<sup>4</sup> The *land-ryht* or land-right was, I have little doubt, the fief granted to the court-bard for his professional services. The high rank and dignified station of these officers during the *twelfth* century admit of no dispute, and that the bard was a "King's Thane" during the earliest period of Anglo-Saxon antiquity, we learn from *Beowulf*.

<sup>5</sup> [MS. Cotton, Calig. A. ix. The extract here given is printed at the end of Wright's edition of the *Owl and Nightingale*, p. 81; and in Morris, *Old English Miscellany*, p. 186.—W. W. S.]

Lechurs and horlinges : thider sculen wende .  
 And ther heo sculen wunien : euere buten ende .  
 Alle theos false chepmen : the feond heom wule habbe .  
 Bachares and brueres : for alle men heo gabbe .  
 Loȝe he holdet hore galun : mid berme heo hine fulleth .  
 And euer of the purse : that seluer heo tulleth .  
 Bothe heo maketh feble : heore bred and heore ale .  
 Habben heo that seluer : ne tellet heo neuer tale .  
 Godemen for godes luue : beleueth suche sunne .  
 For atten ende hit bi-nimeth : heueriche wunne .

Alle prestes wifes : ich wot heo beoth for-lore .  
 Thes [persones] ich wene : ne beoth heo noȝt for-bore .  
 Ne theos prude ȝungemen : that luuieth malekin .  
 And theos prude maidenes ; that luuieth janekin .  
 At churchē . and at cheping : hwanne heo to-gadere come .  
 Heo runeth to gaderes : and speket of derne luue .  
 Hwenne heo to churchē cometh : to the haliday .  
 Eueruch wile his leof iseon : ther ȝef he may .  
 Heo beholdeth wadekin : mid swithe gled eye .  
 [Atom his hire pater-noster] : biloken in hire tye .<sup>1</sup>

Masses and matines : ne kepeth heo nouht .  
 Robin wule Gilot : leden to then ale .  
 And sitten ther to-gederes : and tellen heore tale .  
 He mai quiten hire ale : and sothen do that gome .  
 An eue to go mid him : ne thu[n]chet hire no schome .  
 Hire sire and hire dame : threteth hire to bete .  
 Nule heo for-go robin : for al heore threte .  
 Euer heo wile hire schere : ne com hire no mon neh .  
 Fort that hire wombe : up arise an beh .

<sup>1</sup> That is, "never do they give right measure."

<sup>2</sup> That politic device, the celibacy of the clergy, seems ever to have jarred with the good sense and manly feeling of the Englishman. Cardinal after cardinal was sent over to enforce obedience to this regulation of the church. The story, which Matthew Paris tells us of one of these cardinals, and the long list of vices which were, at the same time, imported from Italy—vices which are alluded to in Episcopal Visitations, and provided against, with disgusting particularity, in the charters of many Ecclesiastical Foundations—afford a terrible commentary on the system.

<sup>3</sup> [Dr. Guest prints *prestes sones*, which he explains by "priest's sons." But the MS. has "persones," where "per" is expressed by the usual abbreviation—W. W. S.]

<sup>4</sup> [Dr. Guest has "run."—W. W. S.]

<sup>5</sup> [Dr. Guest prints *Atom his hire primur*, which he explains by "Run away."

Lechours and whoremongers thither shall wend,  
 And there shall they won, ever without end!  
 All these false chapmen, the fiend shall have them,  
 Bakers and brewers—for all men they cheat;  
 Low they hold their gallon, with froth they fill it;  
 And [ever] from the purse the silver they toll [entice];  
 Both make they weak—their bread and their ale,  
 Get they but the silver, never tell they tale.<sup>1</sup>  
 Goodmen, for God's love, leave ye such sin!  
 For at the end it taketh away the joy of heaven-ric.

All priests' wives,<sup>2</sup> I wot they be forlorn (lost) !  
 These [parsons],<sup>3</sup> I ween, they will not be let off!  
 Nor these proud youngmen, that love Malekin,  
 And these proud maidens, that love Janekin;  
 At church and at market, when they together come  
 They [whisper]<sup>4</sup> together, and speak of secret love;  
 When to church they come—to the holiday—  
 Ev'ry one will his love see, there, if he may;  
 She beholdeth Wadekin, with right glad eye—  
 [At home is her pater-noster]<sup>5</sup>—lock'd up in her [box] !  
 Good men for God's love, leave ye such sin—  
 For, at the end, it taketh away the joy of heaven-ric.

Masses and matins they do not keep !  
 [Robin<sup>7</sup> will] Gillot to the ale-house lead,  
 And there they sit together, and they tell their tale;  
 She may quit her ale, and so then to that man,<sup>8</sup>  
 And ever [At eve] to go with him seemeth to her no shame !  
 Her sire and her dame threaten her to beat—  
 She'll not forego Robin, for all their threat !  
 Ever will she proffer [excuse] herself, nor cometh [has come] any man  
                   her nigh,  
 But that straightway [Until at last], &c.

from her is her primer;" but see Morris, *Old English Miscellany*, pp. 190, 191. He also explains *teye* by "scrip," but it is rather "box;" O. F. *taie*, Lat. *theca*. Dr. Morris explains it by "tie," which is even worse.—W. W. S.]

<sup>6</sup> There is here no break in the MS., but the failure of the rime clearly shows there is some omission. If we suppose the burthen of the second stave, and the first verse of the third, to have been passed over in transcription, we shall make each stave consist of twelve verses.

<sup>7</sup> If we might infer that the good monk is here inveighing against the Morris-dancers and Robin-hood, this would be by far the most ancient mention of that redoubtable personage. *Gillot* was long given as a nickname to any coarse, vulgar, masculine woman. [The first part of this note is founded on a misreading. Dr. Guest prints *vuole* instead of *wule*, and explains it by "Robin's folk." But there is no mention of *folk* at all.—W. W. S.]

<sup>8</sup> [Rather—He may pay for her ale, and afterwards play that game.—W. W. S.]



Godemen for godes luue : beleueth eoure sunne .  
 For aten ende hit benimeth : heueriche wunne .

Bidde we seinte Marie : for hire milde mode .  
 For the teres that heo wep : for hire sone blode .  
 Also wis so he god his : for hire erndinge .  
 To the blisse of heuene : he us alle bringe .

In this song the burthen slightly varies its form. Such shifting appendage was common in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries ; and the variations tolerated were, in some cases, so great, as hardly to preserve the essential properties of a burthen.

Our modern songs occasionally shut in their staves with some lines in *prose*. These are generally more or less *shifting* ; and sometimes no repetition whatever can be found either of phrase or sentiment. It might, perhaps, in such case, be termed a *wheel*—the absence of all definite rhythm

Mon that wol of wysdam heren  
 At wyse hending he may lernen  
 That was marcolues sone  
 Gode thonkes and monie thewes  
 Forte teche fele shrewes  
 For that was euer is wone.

Ihu crist al folkes red  
 That for us alle tholede ded  
 Vpon the rode tre  
 Leue us alle to ben wys  
 Ant to end in his seruys  
 Amen par charite  
 God beginning maketh god endyng.

quothe Hendyng [ll. 1-16].

Betere were a riche mon  
 Forte spouse a god womon  
 Thah hue be sumdel pore  
 Then to brynge into his hous  
 A proud quene ant daungerous

<sup>1</sup> Harl. MS. 2253. [Printed in *Specimens of Early English*, ed. Morris and

Good men, for God's love, leave ye your sin!  
 For, at the end, it taketh away the joy of heaven-ric.

Pray ye Saint Mary, by her gentle heart—  
 By the tears that she wept—by her son's blood—  
 (*As wise as she is good!*) by her burial cheer [*intercession*]  
 To the bliss of heaven may she bring us all!

being considered as a substitute for some particular selection.

Such wheels, however, are not of modern date. There is a song<sup>1</sup> written in the thirteenth century (and probably in the early half of it) which has each of its staves followed by a proverb, connected with and illustrating the subject. The song consisted originally of thirty-eight staves, and is now provided with two others (without prose accompaniment however), which seem to have been added by some copyist, or, as we might term him, editor. He thus introduces his author to the reader.

The man, that would of wisdom hear,  
 From wise Hending may he learn,  
 (That was Marcolf's son,  
 Good principles and fair manners,  
 Them to teach to many a shreward—  
 For such was ever *his* wont.

Jesu Christ, all men's succour,  
 That for us all suffer'd death,  
 Upon the rood-tree,  
 Grant us all to be wise,  
 And to end in his service—  
 Amen, for Charity!  
 Good beginning maketh good ending,  
 quoth Hending, &c.

Better were a rich man  
 To spouse a good woman,  
 Though she be somewhat poor—  
 Than to bring into his house  
 A proud quean and dangerous

---

Skeat, p. 35; in Böddeker's edition of MS. Harl. 2253, p. 287; and elsewhere.  
 —W. W. S.]

That is sumdel hore  
 Moni mon for londe wyueth to shonde  
 quoth Hendyng, &c. [ll. 273-281.]

The glotoun ther he fint god ale  
 He put so muche in ys male  
 Ne leteth he for non eye  
 So longe he doth uch mon rytht,  
 That he wendeth hom by nytht,  
 Ant lyth ded by the weye  
 Drynk eft lasse ant go by lyhte hom  
 quoth Hending, &c. [ll. 290-297.]

Hendyng seith soth of mony thyng  
 Ihu crist heuene kying  
 Vs to blisse brynge.  
 For his swete moder loue  
 That sit in heuene vs aboue  
 3eve us god endyng. [ll. 306-311.]

---

A very common kind of wheel originated in the use of the middle rime instead of the final—the last verse of the stave being thus converted into two short ones. It was

---

My dere sones where ye fare : by frith or by fell  
 Take good hede in his tyme : how Tristrem woll tell  
 How many maner bestes : of venery there were  
 Listenes now to our Dame : and ye shulen here  
 Fowre maner bestes : of venery there are  
 The first of hem is a hart : the second is an hare  
 The boar is one of tho  
 The wolf and no mo.  
 And where so ye comen : in play or in place  
 Now shal I tel you : which ben bestes of chace  
 One of them a buck : another a doo,  
 The ffox and the marteryn : and the wilde roo  
 And ye shal my dere sones : other bestes all  
 Where so ye hem finde : rascall hem call  
 In frith or in fell  
 Or in fforest y yow tell.

---

<sup>1</sup> [The meaning of *hore* is very different ; it is a substantive.—W. W. S.]

<sup>2</sup> [This is a translation of *wyneth*, as printed in the former edition. But *wyueth* = wiveth, marrieth.—W. W. S.]

<sup>3</sup> A *frith* was a woodland, not afforested.

That is somewhat hoar (aged)<sup>1</sup>—  
 Many a man for sake of land winneth his way<sup>2</sup> to shame,  
 quoth Hending, &c.

The glutton, where he finds good ale,  
 He putteth so much in his hide,  
 He ceaseth for no fear—  
 So long he doth every man "right,"  
 That he goeth home by night,  
 And ly'th dead by the way.  
 Drink less hereafter, and go by daylight home,  
 quoth Hending, &c.

Hending saith truth of many things ;  
 Jesu Christ, king of heaven,  
 May he bring us to bliss ;  
 For his sweet mother's love,  
 That sitteth in heaven, us above,  
 May he give us good ending !

---

adopted by Dame Juliana Berners, in her Treatise on Hunting, written in the year 1481.

---

My dear sons, wheresoe'er ye fare, by frith<sup>3</sup> or on hill,  
 Take good heed, how in his time Tristrem<sup>4</sup> would tell,  
 How many kinds of Beasts of *Venery* there were ;  
 Listen now to our Dame, and ye shall hear—  
 Four kinds of Beasts of *Venery* there are,  
 The first of them is a hart, the second is a hare,  
     The boar is one of them,  
     The wolf—and no more.  
 And wheresoe'er ye come, in pageant, or in hall,  
 Now will I tell you, which are Beasts of *Chace*—  
 One of them a buck, another a doe,  
 The fox, and the martern, and the wild roe ;  
 And ye shall, my dear sons, all other beasts,  
 Wheresoever ye find them, *rascal* call them—  
     In frith, or on hill,  
     Or in forest—I tell you.

---

<sup>1</sup> One of Tristrem's chief accomplishments was his skill in hunting. In the middle ages he was looked upon as the great patron of the sportsman. [See notes to Sir W. Scott's edition of Sir Tristrem.—W. W. S.]

The same wheel occurs in a curious satire, which is found immediately preceding the hymn ascribed to Michael of Kildare,<sup>1</sup> and is probably a work of the same author. This satire is full of local allusions, which, to an Irishman, might be intelligible.<sup>2</sup> Its range is a wide one, for, after glancing at the saints, Christopher, Benedict, Francis, &c.,

---

Hail seint michel : with the lange sper  
 Fair beth thi winges : up thi scholder  
 Thou hast a rede kirtil : a non to thi fote  
 Thou ert best angle : that ever god makid  
     This vers is ful wel i-wro3t  
     Hit is of wel furre y bro3t

Hail 3e holi monkes : with 3ur corrin<sup>3</sup>  
 Late and rathe ifillid : of ale and wine  
 Depe cun 3e bouse : that is al 3ure care  
 With seint benet is scourge : lome 3e disciplineth  
     Taketh hed al to me  
     That this is sleche 3e mow wel se.

Hail be 3e marchans : with 3ur gret packes  
 Of draperie avoir de peise : and 3ur wol sackes  
 Gold silver stones : riche markes and ek pundes  
 Lital 3iue 3e ther of : to the wrech pouer  
     Slei3 he was and ful of witte  
     That this lore put in writte, &c.

Hail be ye potters : with 3ur bole ax  
 Fair beth 3ur barmhatres : 3olow beth 3ur fax  
 3e stondith at the schamil : brod ferlich bernes  
 Fleiis 3ow folowith : 3e swolowith y now  
     The best clerk of al this tun  
     Craftefullich makid this bastun, &c.

Makith glad mi frendis : 3e sittith to long stille  
 Spekith now and gladieth : and drinketh al 3ur fille

---

<sup>1</sup> See p. 600. [From MS. Harl. 913, fol. 7.]

<sup>2</sup> It seems there was near the town a piece of water called the *lake*, with a visit to which he threatens the fraudulent "brewster." The place must also have been one of considerable traffic, and a staple for wool. It seems to have boasted a Benedictine monastery, a nunnery, a house of Dominicans within the walls, and one of Franciscans without. The white Friar is only mentioned as a stroller from Drogheda. What town in Ireland answers these conditions?

and the friars, monks, &c., who followed their rules, it attacks the trader. As the white friar is twitted with his vagabond life, and the black friar with his costly habit, so the merchant is accused of covetousness, the butcher of gluttony, and the baker of fraud. It opens with an address to the poet's patron saint, the Archangel Michael.

---

Hail, Saint Michael, with the long spear !  
Fair are thy wings, upon thy shoulder,  
Thou hast a red kirtle down to thy foot—  
Thou art the best of angels, that ever God made !  
    This verse is full well y-wrought,  
    It is from far y-brought ! &c.

Hail, ye holy monks, with your *black jack* ?  
Late and early y-filled with ale and wine !  
Deep can ye bouse, and that is all your care—  
With Saint Bennet's scourge poorly [often] ye take to discipline !  
    Take heed all ye to me—  
    That this is *sly*, ye may well see ! &c.

Hail be ye merchants, with your great packs  
Of drapery *avoir-du-pois*, and your wool sacks,  
Gold, silver, stones, rich marks, and eke pounds—  
Little thereof ye give to the poor wretch !  
    Sly was he and full of wit,  
    That this *lore* hath put in writ !

Hail be ye butchers, with your poll-ax,  
Fair be your aprons, yellow is your hair,  
Ye stand at the shambles, broad and awful fellows—  
Flies follow you ! ye swallow enough !  
    The best clerk of all this town,  
    Skilfully made he this *baston* !

Make you glad, my friends, ye sit too long still,  
Speak now, and be merry, and drink ye all your fill,

---

<sup>3</sup> Jamieson gives *coruin*, leather. [He refers to Gawain Douglas, where, as Mr. Small shows, the word is *corvyns* = *corven*, i.e. cut !—W. W. S.] "Boethius shewed the art of sowing, as wel for tailors as *corviners* and shoemakers."—Holland, tr. of Pliny, b. vii. c. 56. [Perhaps then *corrin* or *corvin* is short for *Cordovan leather*.—W. W. S.]

3e habbeth ihird of men lif : that wonith in lond  
 Drinkith dep and makith glade : ne hab 3e non other nede  
 This song is y seid of me  
 Euer iblessid mot 3e be.

It will be seen there is no rime between the third and fourth verses of Michael's stave. The omission, however, was not without its object. Seconded, for the most part, by some change in the rhythm, it gives a very marked and peculiar character to the *fourth* line—that is, to the verse, in which lies the sting of the satire.

There is none so styf on stede  
 Ne none so prowde in prese  
 Ne none so dughty in his dede  
 Ne none so dere in deese  
 No kyng no knyght no wight in wede  
 From dede have maide hym seese  
 Ne <sup>2</sup> fleshe he was wont to fede  
 It shall be wormes mese

    Your dede is wormes coke  
 Your myrroure here ye loke  
 And let me be youre boke  
 Your sampille take by me  
 Fro dede you cleke in cloke  
 Sicke shalle ye alle be.

Ilkon in sicke aray : with dede thai shalle be dighte <sup>5</sup>  
 And closid cold in clay : wheder he be kyng or knyght  
 For alle his garmentes gay : that semely were in sight  
 His fleshe shall frete away, with many a wofulle wight  
 When wofully sich wyghtys  
 Shalle gnawe thise gay knyghtys  
 Thare lunges and thare lightys  
 There harte shall frete in sonder  
 Thise māsters most of myghtys  
 Thus shalle thay be broght under.

There then follow four staves, similar in structure to the last. It will be seen that the wheel is always knit to its

<sup>1</sup> Towneley Mysteries; Lazarus; p. 324.

<sup>2</sup> Is not *ne* a mistake for *the*?

<sup>3</sup> That is, the king, knight, warrior, &c.

Ye have heard of men's life—of such as dwell in land—  
 Drink ye deep, and make you glad—ye have no other business !  
 This song has now been sung by me,  
 Ever y-blessed mote ye be !

---

Another kind of wheel seems to have been formed, by the converting of two riming tetrameters into an interwoven stave of four verses. In the example which follows,<sup>1</sup> the first section is tripled. Lazarus, who has just been raised from the dead, is the speaker.

---

There is none so stiff on steed,  
 And none so proud in press,  
 And none so doughty in deed,  
 And none so lov'd in hall,  
 (No king, no knight, no man in weeds,)   
 That from death hath made him rise [*lit. cease*] !  
 The flesh he <sup>3</sup> was wont to feed—  
 It must be food for worms !  
 Your <sup>4</sup> death is cook to th' worms ;  
 On your mirrour here you may look ;  
 And let me be your book,  
 Your sample take by me !  
 To 'scape from death you may grasp with a clutch—  
 But such shall ye all be.

Each one in such array—with death shall they be dight,  
 And closed cold in clay, whether he be king or knight,  
 For all his garments gay, that seemly were to sight,  
 His flesh shall be eaten away with many a woeful creature ;  
 When woefully such creatures  
 Shall gnaw these gay knights,  
 Their lungs and their lights—  
 Their heart shall part asunder !  
 These *seignours*, high of power,  
 Thus shall they be brought under.

---

stave by means of *iteration*, as well as each stave to the one preceding by a like artifice.

---

<sup>4</sup> Here Lazarus more directly addresses himself to the spectators.

<sup>5</sup> These four verses, it will be seen, answer to the eight verses of the first stave.



I have quoted from this *Mystery* (with some risk of offending the fastidious reader) *two* staves, because I think the peculiar form, given to the first of them, goes far to prove, that the common stave of eight verses, with alternate rime,<sup>1</sup> is nothing more than the stave of four tetrameters, with a rime interwoven—or rather, I would say, it is an *imitation* of such stave.

But of all the wheels known to our language, the most important are those fashioned on the *bob*—that is, on the

---

Thu | art hel | e and lif | and liȝt | .  
 And hel | pest al | mon-kun | ne .  
 Thu | us hau | est ful wel | idiȝt .  
 Thu ȝeu | e us weol | e and wun | ne .  
 Thu broht | est dai | and ev | e niȝt | .  
 Heo broȝ | te woht | thu broȝt | est riȝt | .  
 Thu al | messe and | heo sun | ne .  
 Bisih | to me | lau | edi briȝt | .  
 Hwen | ne ich schal wen | de heon | ne .  
 So wel | thu miht | .

---

This is clearly the stave of four imperfect Iambic tetrameters, with an interwoven rime, and the first section of the third tetrameters *repeated*. It is generally to a Psalm-stave of four long verses, or, at least, to some one of the derivative staves, that the *bob* is found attached in our older poetry; but in the sixteenth century it was used with other staves almost as freely as at the present day.

---

Whii war<sup>4</sup> and wrake in londe : and manslaucht is icome  
 Whii hungger and derthe on eorthe : the pore hath undernome  
 Whii bestes ben thus storve : whii corn hath ben so dere  
 Ye that wolen abide : listneth and ye muwen here.

The skile

I nelle liȝen for no man : herkne whoso wile.

---

<sup>1</sup> See p. 595.

<sup>2</sup> [MS. Cotton Calig. A. xi. The extract will be found at the end of Wright's edition of the *Owl and Nightingale*, p. 65; and in *An Old English Miscellany*, ed. Morris, p. 160.—W. W. S.]

short and abrupt wheel, which came into fashion during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

As to the origin of this singular appendage—whether the *bob* came from the Latin or the Celtic—I shall not stop to make inquiry. It seems to have been familiar to the Romance dialects before it was adopted by the English. The earliest native specimen I have met with is in a hymn to the Virgin, which is found in the Layamon MS.,<sup>2</sup> and may date about the year 1200.

---

Thou art health, and life, and light,  
 And helpst all mankind!  
 Thou hast us full well y-dight,  
 O give us weal and joy!  
 Thou broughtest day, and Eva night,  
 She brought wrong, and thou brought'st right,  
 Thou alms, and she sin—  
 Look on me, Lady bright,  
 When I hence shall wend—  
 As well thou may'st!

---

The simplest kind of bob-wheel consists of the bob, and a long verse following, and riming with it. It is used in a satire called *Simonia*, which is found in the Auchinleck MS.,<sup>3</sup> and which appears from the historical allusions to have been written in the reign of Edward the Second. It opens with the stave,

---

Why war and ruin on land and manslaughter have come,  
 Why hunger and dearth 'on earth, have overta'en the poor,  
 Why beasts have thus died, and corn hath been so dear,  
 Ye that will abide, listen and ye may hear  
 The reason—  
 I will lie for no man—hearken whoso will!

---

<sup>3</sup> [Printed in Political Songs, ed. Wright (Camden Society), from the same MS. in the Advocates' Library at Edinburgh. Mr. Wright calls it "Poem on the Evil Times of Edward II."—W. W. S.]

<sup>4</sup> [*Werre*; Wright.]

If we suppose the four first verses to rime *continuously*, instead of by couplets, a rime to be interwoven throughout the stave, and each section to be written as a distinct verse, we shall get the curious stanza in which Tristrem was written,<sup>1</sup> and which, in one of his songs, is also used by Minot. To make this complicated stanza still more diffi-

---

So wylle a wyght as I  
 In warld was never man  
 Howsehold and husbandry  
 Fulle sore I may it ban  
 That bargain dere I by  
 Yong men bewar red I  
 Wedyng makys me alle wan  
 Take me thi brydylle Mary  
 Tent thou to that page grathly  
 With alle the craft thou can  
                                     And may  
 He that this warld began  
 Wyshe us the way

---

The stanza of Christ's Kirk on the Green is nothing more than the stave of four imperfect Iambic tetrameters, with interwoven rime and this bob-wheel; the interwoven

---

Was nevir in Scotland hard nor sene  
 Sic dansing nor deray  
 Neither at Falkland on the Grene  
 Nor Peebelis at the play  
 As was of wowaris as I wene  
 At Christis kirk on ane day  
 Thir came our kitties waschen clene  
                                     In thair new kertillis of gray  
   Full gay  
 At Christis Kirk of the Green that day.  
  
 To dans thir damsellis them dicht  
 Thir lasses licht of laitis  
 Thair gluis war of the raffel rycht  
 Thair shune wer of the straitis

---

<sup>1</sup> See p. 465.

<sup>2</sup> Towneley Mysteries; p. 138.

<sup>3</sup> [Printed in Pinkerton's *Ancient Scottish Poems*, ii. 244; and in Sibbald's *Chron. of Scot. Poetry*, ii. 359; but the text here given agrees with neither of these.—W. W. S.]

cult, the monks doubled the first section of the third and fourth verses; and so got the stanza which is used in the *Fugacio in Egyptum*.<sup>2</sup> Joseph is the speaker—but in these Mysteries, the most awful events are coloured with the humours of low life.

So distracted a creature as I,  
In the world was never man !  
Household and husbandry—  
Full sore may I them ban ;  
That bargain dear I abye !  
Young men, beware—I counsel you—  
Wedding makes me all wan !  
Take thy bridle, Mary,  
Look thou to that child quickly,  
With all the skill thou canst  
                And may'st —  
He that this world began,  
May *He* show us the way !

rhyme not reaching to the last verse, and the rhyme between such verse and the bob being only preserved in the first stave.<sup>3</sup>

Was never in Scotland heard or seen  
Such dancing, or such fun,  
Neither at Falkland ' on the Green,  
Nor Peebles at the play,  
As was of wooers, as I ween,  
At Christ's Kirk on a day—  
There came our wenches washen clean,  
In their new kirtles of gray  
Full gay !  
At Christ's Kirk of the Green that day.

To dance these damsels made them ready,  
These lasses light of manner ;  
Their gloves were of roe-leather good,  
Their shoon were from the straits (Morocco)

<sup>4</sup> In James the Fifth's reign there was a royal palace at Falkland, and Peebles was famous for its archery-play. The fairs, at both places, were celebrated.



Their kirtles were of Lincoln fine,  
 Well preat with many plaits—  
 They were so silly, when men came near them—  
 They squeel'd like any goats  
     So loud!  
 At Christ's Kirk of the Green that day, &c.

---

amples is found in the song made by the rebel barons, after their victory at Lewes, A.D. 1264. The barons had attempted to bribe the king's brother, Richard, Earl of Cornwall and King of the Romans, a circumstance which is thus turned against him in the first stanza.<sup>2</sup>

---

Sit ye all still, and herken to me!  
 The king of *Allemaigne*, by my lealty,  
 Thirty thousand pounds asked he,  
 For to make the peace in the country!  
     And so did he more—  
 Richard, though thou be ever a trickster,  
     Trick us shalt though never more!

---

last verse was sometimes *repeated*. The song against the Scots,<sup>3</sup> written in the year 1306, begins as follows,—

---

'Listen, Lordings, a new song will I begin  
 Of the traitors of Scotland, that are taken with a snare;  
 The man that loveth falseness, and will never cease,  
 Sorely may he drede the life that he is in,  
     As I understand—<sup>4</sup>  
 Seldom was he glad,  
 That never was satisfied  
     With hate and with malice.

---

Political Songs, ed. Wright, p. 212; or Bøddeker's edition of MS. Harl. 2253, p. 126.]

<sup>4</sup> This is only one of those expletives, which occur so frequently, and to modern ears so impertinently, in our older poetry.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 462.

phrase "out-Heroding Herod," for this redoubtable personage is the speaker. [See the Towneley Mysteries, p. 152.]

Thus shall I teach knaves to take example,  
 Them that rave in their wits, to make such mastery ;  
 All wantons, and vagabonds, crack ye no boasts—  
 No sovereign shall save you, your necks will I break  
     Asunder—  
     On no king do ye call,  
     Save on Herod the Royal—  
     Or else many a one shall  
     On your dead bodies wonder !

retained its popularity undiminished for nearly three centuries.

In some cases the first section of the last verse takes the *final* rime instead of the interwoven. The following stave consists of only *two* long verses and the bob-wheel ; but the first sections of both are *tripled*. [Towneley Mysteries, p. 224.]

Alas for dole ! my lady dear,  
 All changed is thy cheer,  
 To see this prince—one without peer—  
     Thus wrapped all in woe !  
 He was thy child, thy fairest *fondling* ?  
 Thy love, thy sport, thy lovesome son,  
 That, high on the cross, thus hangs alone  
     With body black and blue,  
     Alas !  
 To me and many more a good master was he !

we get the wheel, that was used by Hugh of the Palace, in his romance of Sir Gawaine.<sup>3</sup>

It will be seen, that the bob-wheel was generally connected with the main body of the stave by a community of rime. When there was no such bond of union—as when the wheel contained a close rime<sup>4</sup>—the necessary

<sup>3</sup> See p. 460.

<sup>4</sup> See pp. 624, 626.



connection of parts depended entirely on the *punctuation*. In such cases, the bob was intimately connected with the verses preceding it, and always followed by an important stop; and thus it formed the link, which tied the wheel to the rest of the stave. But in the fifteenth century the bob was sometimes converted into a long verse, which was often separated from the body of the stave by a full stop. In such case, *iteration*<sup>1</sup> was employed to bind the two parts together—though in the later poems, when a more

---

Hou | shal that | lef|ly syng |  
 That thus | is mar|red in | mournyng |  
 Heo | me wol | to deth|e bring |  
                     Longe er | my day |  
 Gret hir|e wel | that swet|e thing |  
                     With e|3enen'gray |

Hire he3|e haveth wound|ed me | ywis|se  
 Hire ben|de brow|en that bring|eth blis|se  
 Hire come|ly mouth | that mih|te cuss|e  
                     In muche murthe he were  
 Y wol|de chaung|e myn | for his |  
                     That is | here fere |

Wolde hyr|e fer|e beo | so freo |  
 Ant wurthes were that so | myhte beo |  
 Al for on | y wol|de 3eu|e three |  
                     Without|e chep |  
 From hel|le to heu|ene and son|ne to see |  
                     Nys non | so 3eep |  
                     Ne half | so freo  
 Wose wol|e of lou|e be | trewe|<sup>3</sup>  
                     Do lyst|ne me |.

---

In this stave was written the Legend of Celestyn, perhaps as early as the thirteenth century; and, about a century afterwards, the romance of Octavian. It was at the same period often used in the mysteries, though soon

<sup>1</sup> See p. 574.

<sup>2</sup> [Printed in Wright's Specimens of Lyric Poetry, p. 38; and in Böddeker's edition of MS. Harl. 2253, p. 161; see stanza 4. --W. W. S.]

slovenly versification prevailed, it was very generally neglected.

Another kind of bob-wheel, essentially different, as it would appear, from those we have considered, was borrowed from the Troubadour. It was freely used during the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries; and, in later times, has been immortalised by the genius of Burns. The following extract, from a love-song of the thirteenth century,<sup>3</sup> is particularly curious, inasmuch as in one of the staves the wheel is *repeated*.

---

How shall *he* with good will sing,  
 That thus is spoiled with mourning?  
 She will me bring to death  
                     Long ere my day—  
 Greet her well, that sweet thing  
                     With eyes so grey!

Her eye hath wounded me in sooth,  
 And her bent brows that bring bliss—  
 Her comely mouth, whoso may kiss,  
                     In great joy were he!  
 I would exchange mine for his,  
                     That is her fere (companion.)

Would her fere be so bounteous,  
 And ——— ? were, that so 't might be—  
 All for one I would give three  
                     Without bargaining;  
 From hell to look to the heav'n and sun,  
                     There's none so *lively* ? [sly],  
                     Nor half so free;  
 Whoso would of love be [true],  
                     Make him list to me.

---

afterwards it disappeared from our literature, and was merely lingering in the songs of a remote district, when Burns again made its rhythm familiar to every lover of English poetry.

---

<sup>3</sup> [Printed *acwe* in the former edition, and explained, conjecturally, by *quit*. But the word is *trew*, meaning *true*.]

In some few cases the wheel was preceded by *two*, in-

---

Now me to spulyie sum not spairis  
 To tak my geir no captane cairis  
     Thai ar sa bald  
 Yit tyme may cum, may mend my sairis  
     Thoch I be ald, &c.

Thoch I be sweir to ryd or gang  
 Thair is sum thing I've wantit lang  
     Fane have I wald  
 Thame punysit that did me wrang  
     Thoch I be ald.

---

Sometimes the wheel followed an interwoven stave of

---

Almighty God Iesu Iesu  
 That borne was of a madyn free  
 Thow was a lord and prophete trew  
 Whyls thou had lyfe on lyfe to be  
     Emanges thise men  
 Yll was thou ded, so wo is me  
     That I it ken.  
 I ken it well, &c.

---

In the old Scotch song against the Mass an additional

---

Knawing there is na Christ but ane  
 Quhilk rent was on the rude with roddis  
 Quhy give ye glorie to stock and stane  
 In worschipping of uthir goddis  
 Thir idolis that on alteris standes  
     Ar fenyetness  
 Ye gar not God amang your handis  
     Mumling your mes, &c.

---

In the last song, the rime of the short verses continues unchanged throughout. This is also the case with the earliest Romance specimen, which was written by the celebrated Earl of Poitou—the first troubadour, and grandfather to Eleanor, Queen of England. It should also be

---

<sup>1</sup> [The reference is wrong. The extract is from Maitland's *Poem* cal-

stead of three verses, as in Maitland's song against "The Thievis of Liddisdale."<sup>1</sup>

---

Now me to spoil there are who spare not,  
 To take my gear no captain fears,  
     They are so bold !  
 Yet the time may come may mend my sorrows,  
     Though I be old, &c.

Though I be slow to ride or walk,  
 There is one thing I've wanted long,  
     Fain have I would—  
 Them punished, that did me wrong,  
     Though I be old.

---

four verses. [Towneley Mysteries, p. 270.]

---

Almighty God, Iesu ! Iesu !  
 That born wast of a maiden free,  
 Thou wast a lord and prophet true,  
 Whilst thou hadst life, alive to be,  
     Among these men ;  
 Ill wast thou dead, so woe is me  
     That I it know.  
 I know it well, &c.

---

verse is introduced into the stave.

---

Knowing there is no Christ but one,  
 Who torn was on the rood with rods,  
 Why give ye glory to stock and stone  
 In worshipping of other Gods ?  
 These idols, that on altars stand,  
     Are feigned things !  
 Ye make no God between your hands,  
     Mumbling your mass, &c.

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noticed, before we dismiss the subject, that *iteration* was very often employed to bind together those staves which took the bob-wheel of the Troubadour. Two examples have been already given.

Another kind of wheel was formed by introducing a

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"Solace in Age," printed in Pinkerton's Ancient Scottish Poems, ii. 318.—W. W. S.]

peculiar rhythm into some well-known combination—the sectional pause, for instance, into the common interwoven verse of four accents. Of this wheel we gave an example in a preceding chapter.<sup>1</sup> Another variety originated in the use of the riming section 21,<sup>2</sup> the wheel consisting of two riming verses, one or both of which began with this section.

The simplest, though probably not the most ancient combination into which this wheel enters, is found in one of the songs written by Suckling, early in the seventeenth century.<sup>3</sup>

That none beguiled be by Time's quick flowing,  
Lovers have in their hearts a clock still going ;  
For though Time be nimble, his motions  
Are quicker<sup>4</sup>  
And thicker  
Where Love hath his notions.  
  
Hope is the mainspring on which moves desire,  
And these do the less wheels, fear, joy, inspire ;  
The balance is thought, evermore  
Clicking  
And striking,  
And ne'er giving o'er, &c.

A more complicated stave is found in the Miscellany called "The Handful of Pleasant Delites," published A.D. 1584. The sportsman, we are told, chases the hare to see her wiliness,

More than to win or get the game  
To beare away,  
He is not greedie of the same  
(Thus hunters saie)  
So some men hunt by hote desire  
To Venus' dames, and do require  
*With favor to have her : or else they will die*  
*They love her and prove her : and wot ye why ?*  
For sooth to see her subtilnesse, &c.

But the most important of these staves is that which was used in the "Cherry and the Slae," and which was

<sup>1</sup> See p. 558.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 124.

<sup>3</sup> [Printed in English Poets, ed. Chalmers, vi. 497.]

<sup>4</sup> These three lines would be more correctly written as one verse.

so popular in the north, towards the close of the sixteenth century.<sup>1</sup> The reader is instructed to sing it to "the air of *the bankis of Helicon*." An old song, with this title, is still extant. It seems to have been written about the year 1550, and was probably the earliest specimen of this singular stanza.<sup>2</sup>

Declair, ye bankis of Helicon,   ~  
 Parnassus hills, and dails ilkone,   o~  
     And fontaine Caballein,   ~  
 Gif ony of your musis all   c  
 Or nympthis may be peregall   v  
     Unto my ladye schein?   ~  
 Or if the ladyis, that did lave  
     Their bodyis by your brim,  
 So seemlie war, or yit sa suave (sweet),  
     So bewtiful or trim?  
     Contempill, exempill  
     Tak be hir proper port,  
     Gif onye sa bonye  
     Amang you did resort, &c.

We need hardly remind the reader of "The Jolly Beggars," or the poems, on Despondency, on Ruin, &c., by which Burns has given to this stanza an enduring place in our poetry. Whatever rhythmical form *his* genius has consecrated must now be considered classical.

<sup>1</sup> [See Sibbald's Chronicle of Scottish Poetry, iii. 343.]

<sup>2</sup> [Printed in Pinkerton's Ancient Scottish Poems, ii. 237.]

## CHAPTER V.

## BALLET-STAVES.

UNDER this head I would arrange all the staves borrowed from the Romance languages, which admit only verses of equal length. I shall, however, whenever it may be expedient, follow them through their various changes, though, in the result, they may possibly get beyond reach of the definition just given.

The term *ballet*, which is preferred, as being less likely to mislead than *ballad*,<sup>1</sup> has been used in our language with great vagueness of meaning. Generally, however, the poems, to which I would apply the term, have a very distinctive character, as well in the nature of their poetry, as in the structure of their rhythm. The genius of the people, among whom they originated, was long and deeply impressed upon them. Subtlety, but little depth of thought, cold conceits, and an absence of all genuine feeling, long distinguished the English ballet, no less than the foreign models, from which it was imitated. By degrees it worked itself clear of affectation, but almost in the same proportion its original structure was altered.

In its most characteristic—perhaps I might have said its most *perfect*—form, the ballet consisted of certain staves, each of them ending with the same verse, and the whole shut in with a short stave, called by the French an *envoi*, and by the Spaniards a *tornada*. But neither the burthen at the end of each stave, nor the *envoi* seems ever

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<sup>1</sup> Both these terms were used by our poets, though the former prevailed chiefly in the north. The necessity for the distinction here taken will appear from the fact, that Ritson actually waded through an Oxford MS. entitled "The Abstract Breviare, compyled of divers *balades*, roundels, virelays, tragedies, &c." in search of some counterpart to Chevy-Chase or Johnny Armstrong.

to have been an *essential* characteristic of the ballet. We have many (and some very ancient) specimens, both in French and English, which have neither of these peculiarities; and several metrical forms, which will *here* be classed as ballet-staves, certainly never tolerated either the one or the other. As regards our own literature, I would say the envoi prevailed most in the fourteenth, and the burthen in the fifteenth century. In the latter century, too, the verse of five accents was, I think, more commonly used, than it had been in the century preceding.

There are three staves, which, from their prevalence in our literature, might well be called the *common* ballet staves. They consist respectively of 8, 7, and 6 verses; and the disposition of their rimes will at once appear from the following scheme:

## Ballet-stave of 8.

1  
2  
1  
2  
2  
3  
2  
3

## Ballet-stave of 7.

1  
2  
1  
2  
2  
3  
3

## Ballet-stave of 6.

1  
2  
1  
2  
3  
3

The ballet-stave of eight, like so many others of our metrical forms, seems to have originated with the Latinist. The German monk Ernfrid wrote a poem in the ninth century, from which is taken the following extract.

Felic' ita | tis reg | ula |  
Hac fi | ne sem | per con | stitit |,  
Ad punc | ta cum | venit | sua |,  
In se | volu | ta cor | ruit |,  
Quæcumque vita protulit,  
Ambigua læta tristia,  
Quocumque se spes extulit,  
Infida dura credula, &c.

This is really our ballet-stave of eight, with two rimes—a variety we shall notice shortly. In English poetry, the ballet-stave of eight with three rimes was much more common than the ballet-stave with two, and seems also



to have been in use at a much earlier period. It is found in the elegy which laments the loss of our first

Al|le that beoth | of huer|te trew|e  
 A stoun|de herk|neth to | my song|  
 Of duel | that deth | hath diht | us new|e  
 That mak|eth me syk|e ant sor|ewe among|  
 Of | a knyht|, that wes | so strong|  
 Of | wham God | hath don | ys wil|le  
 Me thun|cheth that deth | hath don | us wrong|  
 That he|son|e shall lig|ge stil|le

Al Eng|lond ah|te for | te know|e  
 Of wham | that song | is, that | y syng|e  
 Of Ed|ward kyng|, that lith | so low|e  
 3ent al | this world | is nom|e con spring|e  
 Trew|est mon | of al|le thing|e  
 Ant | in wer|re war | ant wys|  
 For him | we ah|te oure hon|den wryn|ge  
 Of Cris|tendome | he ber | the pris|, &c.

There are some staves, consisting of verses of equal length, the origin of which is involved in doubt.<sup>1</sup> But I think no one will hesitate to class *this* English stave with the Latin stave, used by Ernfrid; and when we have once fair hold on a Latin rhythmus, many difficulties vanish. There can be little doubt, that Ernfrid's stanza was formed from two of the common staves, consisting of four Iambic dimeters; and that the artificial disposition of the riming syllables must be traced to the same spirit of invention, that gave birth to the close and interwoven rimes. This arrangement of the final rimes may now appear a very unimportant matter, accustomed as we are to almost infinite diversity of metrical structure; but in the eighth and ninth centuries it was a startling novelty, and the influences it exerted have been deep and permanent.

I believe Chaucer to be the first English poet that

<sup>1</sup> [See Dr. Bøddeker's edition of MS. Harl. 2253, p. 140; and Political Songs, ed. Wright, p. 246.—W. W. S.]

<sup>2</sup> See p. 357, n. 7.

Edward, and which, from internal evidence, cannot have been written long after the death of that monarch.<sup>1</sup>

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All, that be true of heart,  
 Awhile hearken to my song—  
 Of sorrow, that death hath wrought us newly,  
 That maketh me sigh, and sorrow the while—  
 Of a knyght, that was so strong,  
 On whom God hath done his will ;  
 Methinks that death hath done us wrong  
 That he thus early should lie still !

All England hath reason for to know  
 Of whom the song is, that I sing—  
 'Tis of Edward king<sup>2</sup> that lieth so low ;  
 Over all this world his name gan spring ;  
 Trewest man of all the earth,  
 And, in war, wary and wise ;  
 For him we've *cause* our hands to wring—  
 Of Christendom he bare the prize ! &c.

---

wrote this stanza, with the verse of five accents ; but Gower had most probably preceded him with his French "ballades," in which, by-the-bye, he always introduces an *envoi*, and makes the last line of each stave a burthen. Besides some smaller poems, Chaucer has written in this stanza the whole of the Monk's Tale, from which I take my example.

His wif | his lord | es : and | his con | cubin | es  
 Ay dronk | en, whil | e : her<sup>4</sup> ap | petit | es last |  
 Out | of this no | ble ves | sels : son | dry win | es ;  
 And | on a wall | : this king | his ey | en cast | e,—  
 And saw | an hand | —arm | les :<sup>5</sup> that wrote | ful fast | e,  
 For fere | of whiche | he quoke | : and sik | ed<sup>6</sup> sor | e.  
 This hand | that Bal | thasar | : so sor | e agast | e,  
 Wrote *Man* | e tech | el phar | es : and | no mor | e.

*Cant. Tales*, 14205.

It will be seen, that in most kinds of ballet-stave there is some one or more portions, consisting of four verses,

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<sup>3</sup> See p. 596.

<sup>4</sup> Their.

<sup>5</sup> This is a beautiful example of the section 5 l. p. See p. 292.

<sup>6</sup> Sighed.

knit together by the interwoven rime. The interwoven is occasionally superseded by the *close* rime; and the ballet-stave of eight is sometimes formed according to the following scheme :

1  
2  
2  
1  
2  
3  
3  
2

These ballet-staves with close rime, though they occasionally appear in English poetry, were much more generally used by foreigners; and particularly by those, who modelled their versification on that of the Provencals, as the Italians and the Spaniards. I shall only notice such of them, as have played an important part in our literature—no good end would be answered by calling the reader's attention to every variety, that has from time to time been taken up by affectation or caprice.

The common ballet-stave of seven is perhaps the stanza in which has been written the greatest quantity of English poetry. It was the favourite stave of the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries; and though most of the poets, who used it, are now only known by name, it still lives in the pages of Chaucer, of Spenser, and of Shakespeare. The first of these has written in this stanza four of his *Canterbury Tales*; the second has used it in his "*hymns*" on Love, Beauty, &c., and in his *Ruins of Time*; and Shakespeare has selected it for his *Rape of Lucrece* and his *Lover's Complaint*.

The following elegant tribute, intended for a man every way unworthy of it, the celebrated Earl of Leicester, is found in the *Ruins of Time* [ll. 183-196].

It is not long since these two eyes beheld  
A mightie prince of most renowned name,  
Whom England high in count of honour held,  
And greatest ones did sue to gaine his grace—  
Of greatest ones he, greatest in his place,

Sate in the bosom of his Soveraine,  
And *Right and Loyal* did his word maintaine.

I saw him die, I saw him die as one  
Of the meane people, and brought foorth on beare,  
I saw him die, and no man left to mone  
His dolefull fate, that late him loved deare,  
Scarce anie left to close his eyelids neare,  
Scarce anie left upon his lips to laie  
The sacred sod, or requiem to saie, &c.

Gascoigne calls this stanza *rhythme-royal*, "and certainly it is a royall kynde of verse, serving best for grave discourses." King James gives a somewhat similar name to the ballet-stave of eight, which he calls the *ballat-royal*. The epithet *royal* seems to be derived from the *chant-royal* of the French, a short poem in ballet-stave, written in honour of God or the Virgin Mary; and by which, according to French critics, the abilities of "the king" were tested in the poetical contests at Rouen. There are in our own literature many traces of the use, to which these stanzas were originally put; thus, in his *Confessio Amantis*, Gower changes his couplet metre of four accents to the ballet-stave of seven, immediately he begins his supplication to Venus.

King James terms the ballet-stave of six, *common verse*; and the frequent use, which was made of it during the whole of the sixteenth and the latter half of the fifteenth century, in some measure justifies the title. He thinks it well-fitted for "materis of love;" but the range of its application was by no means limited. The following staves are taken from [the section named *Thalia* in] Spenser's *Tears of the Muses*. One would almost wish to retain the old delusion, that the compliment was meant for Shakespeare, but modern criticism says Sir Philip Sydney.

Where be the sweete delights of Learnings treasure,  
That wont with comick sock to beautifie  
The painted Theaters, and fill with pleasure  
The list'ner's eyes, and eares with melodie,  
In which I<sup>1</sup> late was wont to reign as Queene,  
And maske in mirth with Graces well besene?

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<sup>1</sup> *Thalia* is the speaker.

O all is gone, and all that goodly glee,  
Which wont to be the glorie of gay wits,  
Is layd abed, and no where now to see,  
And in her roome unseemly sorrow sits,  
With hollow browes, and griesly countenance,  
Marring my joyous gentle dalliaunce, &c. . . .

And he the man, whom nature self had made  
To mock herself, and truth to imitate,  
With kindly counter, under mimick shade,  
Our pleasant *Willy*, ah! is dead of late;  
With whom all joy and jolly merriment  
Is also deaded, and in dolour drent.

In stead thereof, scoffing scurrilitie  
And scorning folly with contempt is crept,  
Rolling in rimes of shameless ribaudrie,  
Without regard, or due decorum kept;  
Each idle wit, at will, presumes to make,<sup>1</sup>  
And doth the learned's task upon him take.

But that same gentle spirit, from whose pen  
Large streams of honnie and sweet nectar flow,  
Scorning the boldness of such base-born men,  
Which dare their follies forth so rashly throw,  
Doth rather choose to sit in idle cell  
Than so himself to mockery to sell, &c.

The ballet-stave of five is of very rare occurrence in our poetry. It seems naturally to range with the ballet-stave of six, as it most nearly approaches it in the peculiarities of its structure. It is written in verses both of four and of five accents; and was chiefly used at the end of the fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth century. Its rimes were ranged in the following order.

1  
2  
1  
2  
2

The couplets which shut in the ballet-staves of 6 and 7, have no metrical connection with the rest of the stanza; and I believe it was the metrical union that is found in the

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<sup>1</sup> That is, to write poetry.

ballet-stave of 8, which induced Puttenham to prefer it to the latter of these combinations. His reason for the preference was, in his own language, "because it receiveth *better band*." This *band* could be given to the ballet-stave of 7, by making the last "couple" inclose a riming termination, belonging either to the first or to the second set of rimes ;

1	1
2	2
1	1
2	2
3	3
1	2
3	3

and both these combinations were occasionally made use of. Spenser has used the second of them in his *Daphnaida*—an elegy upon the death of Lady Douglas Gorges [l. 253].

Yet fell she not as one enforc'd to die,  
 Ne died with dread, and grudging discontent,  
 But as one toil'd with travel down doth lie,  
 So lay she down, as if to sleep she went,  
 And clos'd her eyes with careless<sup>1</sup> quietness,  
 The whiles soft death away her spirit hent,  
 And soul assoyl'd from sinful fleshliness.

In like manner the ballet-stave of 6 was sometimes written with banded rime ; but, in such case, they were obliged to reduce the number of rimes to *two*. The stave in which Spenser wrote his October-Eclogue may be called the banded ballet-stave of 6, with close rime [ll. 79-84].

O peerless Poesie, where is then thy place,  
 If not in Prince's palace thou doe sit,  
 (And yet is Prince's palace the most fit),  
 Ne breast of baser birth doth thee embrace ?  
 Then make thee wings of thine aspiring wit,  
 And, whence thou cam'st, fly back to heav'n apace.

The other ballet-staves were also occasionally written with only two rimes—the first rime being substituted for

<sup>1</sup> Void of care, that is *anxiety*.

the third. In such case, the stave, of course, possessed all necessary *band*, and the expedients we have mentioned were unnecessary; but nevertheless we sometimes find the two rimes even in the banded ballet-stave of 7. The June-Eclogue [of Spenser] is written in the ballet-stave of *eight*.

Lo! Colin, here the place, whose pleasant sight  
From other shades hath wean'd my wand'ring mind.  
Tell me what wants me here, to work delight?  
The simple air, the gentle warbling wind  
So calm, so cool, as no where else I find;  
The grassy ground with dainty daisies dight,  
The bramble-bush, where birds of every kind  
To th' water's fall their tunes attemper right, &c. . . .

Then, if by me thou list advised be,  
Forsake the soil that so doth thee bewitch,  
Leave me those hills, &c.

King James, when he gives an example of "Troilus verse," quotes a stave with two rimes.

1  
2  
1  
2  
2  
1  
1

This is not quite correct, as Chaucer wrote his *Troilus* and *Cresseide* in staves of three rimes; but it shows that, in the opinion of the critic, the common ballet-stave of 7 was preferably written with only two.

The usual expedients for obtaining variety were applied to the ballet-stave. By *repeating* the last verse of the common ballet-stave of 7, we get the stanza which was used in Britain's *Ida*—a poem that has been ascribed to Spenser. In like manner, by tripling the odd verses in the ballet-stave of 8, with two rimes, we obtain a stanza of 16 verses, which may be found in the romance of *Annelida* and *Arcite*; <sup>1</sup> and by doubling the first and third verses in the

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<sup>1</sup> [See Chaucer, ed. Morris, v. 205.]

banded ballet-stave of 7,<sup>1</sup> with two rimes, there results another stave, which is also to be met with in that poem.

This *latter* is an important stanza. King James recommends it for the "description of heroique actis and martial and knictly faittis of armis," &c. It was used by Dunbar in his *Golden Targe*,<sup>2</sup> and also by Gawin Douglas in his *Palice of Honour*.

O reverend Chaucere, rose of Rethoris all,  
As in oure tong ane flour imperial,  
That raise in Britane evir, quha reidis richt,  
Thou beris of makaris the tryumph ryall;  
Thy freche annamallit termes celicall  
This mater coud illumynit have full brycht;  
Was thou noucht of our inglisch all the lycht,  
Surmounting every tong terrestriall  
Als fer as Mayis morrow dois midnycht?

O morale Gower, and Lydgait laureat,  
Your sugarit lippis, and tongis aureat,  
Bene to our eiris cause of grit delyte;  
Your angel mouthis most mellifluate  
Our rude language hes cleir illuminat,  
And fair ourgilt our speche, that imperfyte  
Stude, or your goldin pennis schup to wryte;  
This yle befoir wes bair, and dissolate  
Of rethorik, or lusty fresche indyte.

*Dunbar, Golden Targe, st. 29, 30.*

Douglas, when his dreamer is once fairly started on his journey, changes his metre to one which is modelled on another variety of the ballet-stave of seven.<sup>3</sup>

Ouir mony gudelie plane we raid bidene,  
Ouir waters wan, throw worthie woddis grene,  
And swa, at last, on lifting up oure ene,  
We se the finall end of our travail,  
Amid ane plane a plesand roche to wail;  
And everie wicht, fra we that sicht had sene,  
Thankand greit God, their hedis law devaill;

<sup>1</sup> See p. 641.

<sup>2</sup> [Printed in Sibbald, *Chron. of Scot. Poetry*, i. 262.—W. W. S.]

<sup>3</sup> [There seems to be some mistake here. In Small's edition of G. Douglas, vol. i. p. 47, the stanza is arranged quite differently, ending with the word *devaill*, and with two extra lines after *bidene*. This makes the stanza *precisely like every other stanza in the poem*, according to the scheme *aabaabbab*.—W. W. S.]



With singing, lauching, merines and play  
Unto this roche we ryden furth the way.

*Palice of Honour, Part 2, near the end.*

We now come to two metrical forms, once famous in our poetry, to wit the *roundle* and the *virelay*. These are always coupled with the ballet by our older poets ;

And many an hymphne for your holy daies,  
That lighten *balades, roundels, virelaies.*

*Chaucer, Prol. to the Legend of Goode Women, l. 422.*

The former of these metrical contrivances is claimed by Boileau as a countryman born, *né Gaulois*. It is as thoroughly French in spirit as in origin ; one of these ingenious trifles, which only a Frenchman could have hit upon, and which no one but a Frenchman would have sought for.

The roundle is a short poem of not more than three staves. It admits only two rimes ; and repeats the whole or part of the opening couplet as a burthen. From these repetitions it takes its name.

In the earlier roundles the burthen consisted of the first couplet, or at least of the first verse ; but it gradually dwindled to the opening hemistich, and at last shrunk to the two first words. It was repeated at the end both of the second and third staves, but was often incorporated, as it were, into the second, especially in the older roundles.

Marot, who has been called King of the Roundelay, chiefly used the roundle of thirteen verses. This quickly superseded the others ; and seems to be the only kind of roundle, which has survived in the recollection of our neighbours. The following, which was made on the meeting of Henry and Francis in the *Champ d'Or*, may serve as an example.

De deux grans rois<sup>2</sup> : la noblesse et puissance  
Veue en ce lieu : nous donne connoissance,

<sup>1</sup> [*Roundelay* is merely a corruption of *rondelet*, diminutive of O. Fr. *rondel*. The suffix *-lay* owes its spelling to confusion with *lay*.—W. W. S.]

<sup>2</sup> I mark the middle pause as an illustration of the rule in p. 522.

Qu' amitié prend : courage de lyon,  
 Pour ruer jus : vielle rebellion  
 Et mettre sus : de paix l'esjouissance.

Soit en beauté : sçavoir et countenance  
 Les anciens : n'ont point de souvenance,  
 D'avoir onc veu : si grand' perfection  
     De deux grans roys ;  
 Et la festin : la pompe, et l'assistance,  
 Surpasse en bien : le triumphe et prestance  
 Qui fut jadis : sur le mont Pelyon ;  
 Car dela vint : la guerre d'Ilyon,  
 Et de ceci : vient paix et alliance  
     De deux grans roys.

There are not many English roundles written on this model. Cotton has left us a very ungallant one in verses of four accents ; which, however, somewhat varies the order of the rimes.<sup>1</sup>

Thou fool ! if madness be so rife,  
 That, spite of wit, thou'lt have a wife,  
 I'll tell thee what thou must expect—  
 After the honeymoon neglect,  
 All the sad days of thy whole life ;

To that a world of woe and strife,  
 Which is of marriage the effect—  
 And thou thy woe's own architect,  
     Thou fool !

Thou'lt nothing find but disrespect,  
 Ill words i' th' scolding dialect,  
 For she'll all tabor be, or fife ;  
 Then prythee go and whet thy knife,  
 And from this fate thyself protect,

    Thou fool !

*Rondeau.*

The roundle of ten verses was used both by Chartier and by Marot. The latter wrote the following against Mathieu de Vaucelles, who had assumed the title of "poete champestre." The burthen, it will be seen, is incorporated into the second stave.

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<sup>1</sup> He gives the couplet, in the second stave, to the second rime instead of the first ; and makes the rimes change places in the third stave.

Qu'on mene aux champs ce coquardeau,  
 Lequel gaste, quand il compose,  
 Raison, mesure, texte et glose,  
 Soit en balade soit en rondeau.

Il n'a cervelle ne cerveau,  
 C'est pourquoi si haut crier j'ose,  
 Qu'on mene aux champs ce coquardeau.

S'il veut rien faire de nouveau,  
 Qu'il œuvre hardiment en prose ;  
 (J'entens s'il en scait quelque chose)  
 Car en rithme ce n'est qu'un veau,<sup>1</sup>  
 Qu'on mene aux champs.

On *this* model were written several English roundles ; two of a very early date are given by Ritson. One of them was made by Lidgate on the coronation of Henry the Sixth. The burthen, which clearly consisted of the first verse, seems to have been omitted by the blundering transcriber.

Rejoice ye reames of England and of Fraunce !  
 A braunche that sprang oute of the floure de lys,  
 Blode of saint Edward and saint Lowys,  
 God hath this day sent in governaunce .

God of nature hath yoven him suffisaunce  
 Likly to attayne to grete honure and pris.

O hevenly blossome, o budde of all plesaunce  
 God graunt the grace for to ben als wise,  
 As was thi fader, by circumspect advise,  
 Stable in vertue withoute variaunce.

Three roundles of another form were published by Bishop Percy from a Pepysian MS. which ascribed them to Chaucer. One of them is the following.

Youre two eyn will sle me sodenly,  
 I may the beaute of them not sustene,  
 So wendeth it thorowout my herte kene .

And but your words will helen hastely  
 My hertes wound, while that it is grene,  
 Youre two eyn will sle me sodenly.

---

<sup>1</sup> A pun on the name of *l'aucelles*.

Upon my trouth I say yow feithfully,  
 That ye ben of my liffe and deth the quene,  
 For with my deth the trouth shall be sene.<sup>1</sup>

Youre two eyn, &c.

[Chaucer, ed. Morris, vi. 304.]

Douglas, in his Prologue to the Eneid, mentions the name of "roundalis;" and Ruddiman, like a true Scotchman, will have the "roundal" to be something different from the English roundle or French rondeau. He tells us it was used for raillery, and consisted of eight verses, whereof the two last corresponded with the two first, and also the fourth with the first. He had, probably, never read *Le Jardin de Plaisance*—the French *Ars Poetica* of the fifteenth century.

Ainsi se font *communs* rondeaulx,  
 Ne plus ne moins que cestuy ci,  
 Tant de vont que de vont deaux,  
 Ainsi se font *communs* rondeaulx.

Plusieurs gentils et mains bourdeaux  
 Faillent silz ne font par tel cy,  
 Ainsi se font *communs* rondeaulx  
 Ne plus ne moins que cestuy ci.

We have seen that the application of this trifle to the purposes of raillery is not peculiar to the Scotch.

The virelay takes its name from the peculiarities of its formation—the *veering lay*. The French virelay never contained more than two rimes, one of which was made to lead at the beginning, and the other at the end of the poem. In the English virelay, one, at least, of the rimes always changed its place, but the number of rimes was generally more than two.<sup>2</sup>

Gascoyne tells us he never saw but one song, that was "by authoritie called *verlay*, and that was a long discourse in verses," such as he had himself used in one of his poems—*The Voyage into Holland*. [See Gascoigne's Poems, ed. Hazlitt, vol. i. pp. 388, 507.]

<sup>1</sup> [Read *ysene*, i.e. visible, as in Chaucer's Prologue, l. 594.—W. W. S.]

<sup>2</sup> I suspect the ballet in p. 594 was meant for a Virelay.

The winde waxt calme, as I have said before,  
 O mightie God, so didst thou swage our woes !  
 The silly ship was sowst and smitten sore  
 Wyth counter buffets, blowes, and double blowes ;  
 At last the keele, which might endure no more,

Gan rend in twaine, and let<sup>1</sup> the water in—  
 Then might you see pale looks, and woful cheare,  
 Then might you heare loud cryes, and deadly dinne !  
 Well ! noble minds in peril<sup>2</sup> best appear,  
 And boldest harts in bale will never blinne !

For there were some (of whom I will not say  
 That I was one) that<sup>3</sup> nevyr changed hue, &c.

The critic most probably overlooked the change in the rimes.

Cotton has left us "a Virelay," in which he uses a stave similar to Gascoyne's, save only that he *breaks* two of the verses.

Thou cruel fair, I go,  
 To seek out any fate but thee ;  
 Since there is none can wound me so,  
 Nor that has half thy cruelty,  
 Thou cruel fair, I go.

For ever then farewell !  
 'Tis a long leave I take ; but oh !  
 To tarry with thee here is hell,  
 And twenty thousand hells to go—  
 For ever then<sup>4</sup> farewell !

Here the governing rime of the one stave becomes the intermediate rime of the other ; and in a French virelay the secondary rime would in like manner have been changed into the primary. I incline to think that even in the English song, the change of the secondary rime into the primary would have been more correct.

This favourite combination of the virelay may take its name from the poem—the *virelay-stave*.

<sup>1</sup> [*Suokt.*—Hazlitt.]

<sup>2</sup> [*Perils.*—Hazlitt.]

<sup>3</sup> [*Which.*—Hazlitt.]

<sup>4</sup> [In the edition of Cotton's poems in the *English Poets*, ed. Chalmers, 1810, vi. 710, we here find *though* for *then* ; which must be wrong.—W. W. S.]

In like manner I would give the title of *roundle-stave* to the combination,

1  
1  
2  
2  
1

inasmuch as it twice appears in the common roundle<sup>1</sup> of thirteen verses. Dunbar not unfrequently uses it, and, among other instances, in his *Winter-Meditation*,<sup>2</sup>

I am assayit on everie side,  
Dispair sayis ay, "In tyme provyde,  
" And get sum thing quhairon to leif.  
" Or with grit trouble and mischeif  
" Thow sall into this court abyde," &c.

And than sayis Age, "My friend, cum neir,  
" And be not strange, I the requair,  
" Cum brudir, by the hand me tak,  
" Remember thow hes compt to mak  
" Of all the tyme thow spendit heir."

Syne Deid casts up his yettis wyd,  
Saying, "Thir oppin sall ye byd,  
" Albeid that yow wer never so stout,  
" Undir this lyntall sall thou lout;  
" Thair is nane uthir way besyd," &c.

The final verse in this stave is never found repeated as a burthen, the *three* rimes throwing difficulties in the way of such an arrangement; but in the roundle-stave with *interwoven* rime the burthen was almost universal.

This variety of the roundle-stave was chiefly patronized by Dunbar, who wrote in it nearly one-third of his poems. The following staves are taken from one of the many "complaints" which, in his old age, he addressed to his sovereign:<sup>3</sup>

Schir, yit remembir as of befoir,  
How that my growth is done forloir,  
In your service with pane and greif,

<sup>1</sup> See p. 644.

<sup>2</sup> [See Pinkerton, *Ancient Scottish Poems*, i. 125, 126.]

<sup>3</sup> [See Sibbald, *Chron. of Scot. Poetry*, i. 316.]

Gud consciens cryis, *reward* thairfoir ;  
Excess of thocht<sup>1</sup> dois me mischeif, &c.

May nane remeid my malady,  
Sa weill as ye, Schir, veraly ;  
For with a *benefice* ye may preif  
Gif that I mend nocht hestely ;  
Excess of thocht dois me mischeif.

I wes on yowth, on nureis kne,<sup>2</sup>  
Call'd " dandely, *Bischof*, dandely ! "  
And quhen that ege<sup>3</sup> now dois me greif,  
Ane semple *vicar* I can nocht be ;  
Excess of thocht dois me mischeif, &c.

I do not profess to give every variety of ballet-stave, that may be found in our poetry, for the number would rather confuse the reader than enlighten him ; but when a particular combination has been adopted by any poet of *name*, I shall always notice it, though at the risk of some inconvenience. A certain class of staves were formed by prefixing a *couplet* to some of the ballet stanzas ; and one of these, fashioned on the interwoven roundle-stave, was often used by the Scotch poet,<sup>4</sup> whom we have so often quoted, as in his Tydings fra the Session [stanzas 1, 2, 7].

Ane muirlandis man of uplandis mak  
At hame thus to his nychbour spak,  
Quhat tydings, Gossep ? peax or weir ?  
The tother rounit in his eir,  
I tell yow this under confessioun,  
But laitly lichtit of my meir,  
I come of Edinburgh fra the Sessioun.

Quhat tydingis hard ye thair, I pray yow ?  
The tother answerit, I sall say yow ;  
Keep this all secreit, gentill brother,  
Is na man thair that trestis ane uther ;  
Ane common doer of transgressioun  
Of innocent folkis prevenis a futher.<sup>5</sup>  
Sic tydingis hard I at the Sessioun, &c.

Religious men of divers placis  
Cum thair to wow, and se fair facis,  
Baith Carmelites and Cordelleris, &c.

<sup>1</sup> Anxiety.

<sup>2</sup> Nurse's knee.

<sup>3</sup> Age.

<sup>4</sup> [Dunbar ; see Sibbald, Chron. of Scot. Poetry, i. 247.]

<sup>5</sup> A *fother*, cart-load, a great number.

There is also a curious stave, which should be noticed, if it were only for the celebrity it once possessed throughout Europe—I mean the *Sestino-stave*, invented by Arnaud Daniel, the Troubadour eulogised by Dante and Petrarch. The stave consisted of six verses, which had no rime, but the same final syllables were used in all the staves; and the order was so regulated, that each of the final syllables, in its turn, closed the stanza. Spenser has left us an example.

Ye wasteful woods bear witness of my woe,  
Wherein my plaints did oftentimes resound :  
Ye careless birds are privy to my cries,  
Which, in your songs, were wont to make a part ;  
Thou pleasant spring hast lull'd me oft asleep,  
Whose streames my trickling tears did oft augment.

Resort of people doth my grief augment,  
The walled towns do work my greater woe,  
The forest wide is fitter to resound  
The hollow echo of my careful cries ;  
I hate the house, since thence my love did part,  
Whose wailful want debars my eyes of sleep, &c.  
*Shep. Kal. August.*

Of course these changes would be exhausted with the sixth stave, and then came the *Envoi* of these verses, containing all the six syllables.

And you that feel no *woe*, when as the *sound*  
Of these my nightly *cries*, ye hear *apart*,  
Let break your *sounder sleep*, and *pity*' *augment*.

Celebrity was cheaply purchased, when an invention such as this could ensure it !

The ballet-staves sometimes took, over and above their regular consonances, a quantity of jingle, in the shape of middle rime, sectional rime, interwoven rime, &c. The following interwoven roundle-stave was written by Sir James English,<sup>1</sup> secretary to Queen Margaret, about the year 1513 :

Sic pryd with *prellatis*, so few till preiche and pray,  
Sic hant of *harlottis* with thame bayth nicht and day,

---

<sup>1</sup> [See Sibbald, Chron. of Scot. Poetry, i. 374.]



That sowld haif *ay* thair God afore thair ene,  
 So nice array, so strange to thair abbay,  
 Within this land was nevir hard nor sene.

Douglas, in like manner, deluges with sectional rime the three last stanzas of his "Palice of Honour,"<sup>1</sup> containing the poet's address to that Divinity.

O hie Honour, sweit hevinlie *flour*, digest!  
 Gem vertenous, maist precious, gudliest.  
 For hie renoun, thou art guerdoun conding, &c.

This impertinence, however, was not confined to the north of the Tweed. We had already set them the example; for stanzas, precisely similar to the one last quoted, were used in the romance of *Annelida and Arcite*.

The Italian staves were first brought into the country by the young Englishmen, who visited Italy in the first half of the sixteenth century. Surrey attempted to naturalize the banded three-lined staves of Dante; but, though he had several imitators, these foreign combinations hardly survived him.

The sunne hath twise brought forth his tender greene,  
 Twise clad the earth in lively lustinesse,  
 Ones have the windes the trees despoiled clene.

And ones again begins their cruelnesse—  
 Sins I have hid under my breast the harm,  
 That never shall recover healthfulnessse.

The winters hurt recovers with the warme,  
 The parched greene restored is with shade,  
 What warmth alas! may serve for to disarm

The frozen hart, &c. ?

[See *Tottel's Miscellany*, ed. Arber, p. 3.]

The Italian stave of eight (the celebrated *ottava rima*) had better fortune. From the days of Surrey to those of Byron it has flourished in our poetry. Spenser wrote in it two of his poems, the *Muiopotmos* and *Virgil's Gnat*. From

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 643, 644.

the former of these are taken the following stanzas [stanzas 20 and 27].

The woods, the rivers, and the meadows green,  
 With his air-cutting wings he measur'd wide,  
 Ne did he leave the mountains bare unseen,  
 Nor the rank grassie fens delights untryde ;  
 But none of these, however sweet they been,  
 Mote please his fancy, nor him cause t' abide,  
 His choiceful sense with ev'ry change doth flit,  
 No common things may please a wav'ring wit, &c.

What more felicity can fall to creature  
 Than to enjoy delight with liberty ;  
 And to be Lord of all the works of Nature,  
 To reign in th' air from earth to highest sky,  
 To feed on flow'rs and weeds of glorious feature,  
 To take whatever thing doth please the eye ?  
 Who rests not pleased with such happiness,  
 Well worthy he to taste of wretchedness.

But of all the importations from Italy the most important was certainly the Sonnet. This celebrated stanza is said to have been invented by the Sicilians ; but to Petrarch it owes its celebrity, and to his works should we look for its peculiarities of structure.

"The Petrarchian stanza,"—to use the language of Milton—may be considered as made up of the ballet-stave of eight with close rime,<sup>1</sup> and of two triplets. The ballet-stave has never more than two rimes, and the triplets generally the same number, but sometimes they have three. In the ballet-stave the poet opens and illustrates his subject, which is wound up in the triplets with some striking thought or expression. All *conceit*, however, should be avoided, for one of the chief beauties of the sonnet lies in its repose and dignity.

These rules agree in substance with those which Boileau has given us, both as to the management of the metre and of the subject. He required,

qu'en deux quatrains de mesure pareille  
 La rime avec deux sons frappât huit fois l'oreille,

---

<sup>1</sup> See p. 638.

Et qu'ensuite six vers artistement rangés  
Fussent en deux tercets par le sens partagés.

In the triplets the rime was variously managed. Sometimes Petrarch uses two of Dante's staves, as in Milton's sonnet:

When Faith and Love, which parted from thee never,  
Had ripen'd thy just soul to dwell with God,  
Meekly thou did'st resign this earthly load  
Of death, call'd life, which us from life doth sever.  
Thy works and alms, and all thy good endeavour  
Staid not behind, nor in the grave were trod;  
But, as Faith pointed with her golden rod,  
Follow'd thee up to joy and bliss for ever.  
Love led them on, and Faith, who knew them best,  
Thy handmaids, clad them o'er with purple beams  
And azure wings, that up they flew so drest,  
And spake the truth of thee on glorious themes  
Before the Judge; who thenceforth bade thee rest,  
And drink thy fill of pure immortal streams.

*Sonnet on Mrs. C. Thomson.*

Sometimes he uses the same terminations in the second as in the first triplet. The Sonnet to Cyriack Skinner is written upon this model.

Occasionally Milton makes of the two triplets a ballet-stave of six; and in one sonnet he disposes of the rimes in a way which defies my powers of classification.<sup>1</sup>

Lawrence! of virtuous father virtuous son,  
Now that the fields are dank, and ways are mire,  
Where shall we sometimes meet, and by the fire  
Help waste a sullen day, what may be won  
From the hard season gaining? Time will run  
On smoother, till Favonius re-inspire  
The frozen earth, and clothe in fresh attire  
The lily' and rose, that neither sow'd nor spun.  
What neat repast shall feast us, light and choice,  
Of Attic taste, with wine, whence we may rise  
To hear the lute well touch'd, or artful voice  
Warble immortal notes, and Tuscan air?

<sup>1</sup> [What Milton has done is this. He first had the rimes *choice, voice, rise—air, spare, wise*—in the order *aabcb*; he then transposed the places of *voice* and *rise*.—W. W. S.]

He who of those delights can judge, and spare  
To interpose them oft, is not unwise.

*Sonnet to Mr. Lawrence.*

In the sixteenth century, many of the Italians ventured to alter the structure of the sonnet, and were of course followed by their imitators in this country. The object of all these changes was greater facility. Some of these new sonnets were divided into four parts—to wit, three interwoven staves of four verses, and a couplet—no two of which had any metrical connexion between them. It was in this loose stanza that Spenser wrote his *Visions of Bellay*,<sup>1</sup> and Shakespeare his singular, and, till lately, almost incomprehensible<sup>2</sup> sonnets. When the structure of the Sonnet had been thus trifled with, further change was to be expected. “The Sonnet” increased in length; its interwoven staves became four, five, and at last six; and in one of these poems, written by Surrey, during his imprisonment at Windsor, we have no less than *twelve* such staves—the whole, however, carefully shut in with the final couplet! He thus passes in review the pleasures of his happier days:

—The gravel-ground<sup>3</sup> wyth sleeves tied on the helme  
On foming horse, with swordes and frendly hartes:  
Wyth chere as though one should another whelme,  
Where we have fought, and chased oft with dartes, &c.

The wylde forest, the clothed holts with grene,  
With raynes avayled,<sup>4</sup> and swift ybreathed horse,  
With crye of houndes, and mery blastes betwene,  
Where we did chase the fearful hart of force, &c.

Eccho, alas! that doth my sorrow rewe,  
Returns thereto a hollow sounde of playnt;

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<sup>1</sup> Opitz, Gryphius, &c., usually wrote their sonnets in Alexandrines. But see Müller, Gryph. 145, 156, 163.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Boaden has shown very convincingly, I think, that the W. H., to whom the sonnets are addressed, was William Herbert, afterwards Earl of Pembroke, the gifted son of a most gifted mother. It is only when addressed to a man like this—the most accomplished and high-minded nobleman of his day—that we can tolerate some of the expressions found in these sonnets, coming as they do from Shakespeare.

<sup>3</sup> The tilt-yard.

<sup>4</sup> Lower'd, loosened.

Thus I alone, where all my freedom grewe,  
In pryson pine, with bondage and restraint.  
And with remembrance of the greater greefe  
To banish th' lesse, I find my chief reliefe.

[See *Tottel's Miscellany*, ed. Arber, p. 13.]

In these interwoven staves the reader has doubtless already recognized one of the most important of our metrical forms—I mean the Elegiac stave.<sup>1</sup> The final couplet was quickly lost; and the Sonnet, at the same time that, chiefly by Milton's aid, it recovered its original form, had the honour of giving to our poetry one of its most useful and elegant stanzas. Simplicity is not always a proof of antiquity. The Elegiac stave, and that in which our common ballads are written,<sup>2</sup> though the simplest of their respective classes, were also the last invented. They, both of them, rose out of the ruins of older and more intricate combinations.

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<sup>1</sup> Vide Opitz, *Am Sonntage Exaudi*; Müller, *Deutsche Dichter*, i. 197.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 598.

## CHAPTER VI.

## BROKEN STAVES.

THE royal critic, whom we have so often quoted, seems to have given the name of "cuttit or broken verse" to all such staves, as contained verses of unequal length. The name is not an ill-chosen one ; but, if applied thus comprehensively, it will bring together staves of different origin, which have been used for very different purposes, and are, consequently, connected with very different associations. I would restrict it to a class of staves, which made their first appearance in our poetry about the middle of the sixteenth century, and had no small influence in giving that lyrical turn to our poetry, which soon afterwards began to show itself.

As the sixteenth century advanced, Frenchman, Italian, and Spaniard, were all alike aiming at novelty of metre, and anxious to relieve themselves from the monotony of their *chansons* and *ballades*. The new-found freedom was obtained by the shortening of certain verses, which was effected by lessening the number of their accents. The staves, that resulted from the application of this principle to the older combinations, I would call the *broken staves*.

This class of staves was probably first brought to England with the Psalms of Marot ; and some of the varieties seem to have passed, with the sanction of the great Genevese reformer, from the pages of the French poet, into every corner of Europe, whither Calvinism penetrated. But the broken staff was not applied solely to devotional exercises ; our poets, imitating the Italians, used it for general purposes, and we find it at the same time embodying the quaint conceits and elaborate piety of our

“metaphysical poets,” and the light and airy lyrics of our dramatists.

The broken staves may be divided into two classes, according to the broken verses have, or have not, the same number of accents. To the former of these classes I shall confine myself, as the latter branches out into such infinite variety, as almost to baffle any attempt at arrangement. The broken verse has generally two accents; but sometimes has three, when the original verse has five, and, in a few cases, even when the original verse has four accents. We have already observed that simplicity of structure is not always a proof of antiquity; some of the oldest broken staves are also the most complicated.

It may, I think, be convenient to range these staves according to the original staves, on which they were modelled, beginning with such as rime continuously.

The following “madrigal”<sup>1</sup> made its first appearance in the Miscellany, called *England’s Helicon*. Robert Greene is said to have been the author.

It was a vallie gawdie greene,  
Where Dian at the fount was seene;  
    Greene it was,  
    And did surpass  
All other of Dianæes bowers,  
In the pride of Floræes flowers.

A fount it was, that no man sees,  
Cirkled in with cipres trees,  
    Set so nie,  
    That Phœbus’ eye  
Could not do the virgins scathe,  
To see them naked, when they bathe.

Hard by her, upon the ground,  
Sate her virgins in a round,  
    Bathing their  
    Golden hair,  
And sing | ing all | in not | es hie |  
Fie on Venus’ flattering eye, &c.

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<sup>1</sup> We are told (*Miscell. Antiq.* vol. ii. p. 8), that Sir Thomas Wyatt was the first who introduced Italian numbers into English versification.

The song of "Amphion" was written by Sherburne at the time when Charles was struggling with his Parliament.<sup>1</sup>

Foreign customs from your land,  
Thebans, by fair laws command,  
And your good old rites make known  
Unto your own. . . .

Banish vice, walls guard not crimes,  
Vengeance o'er tall bulwarks climbs,  
O'er each sin a Nemesis  
Still waking is.

Truth-resembling craft, prophane  
Thirst of empire, and of gain,  
Luxury and idle ease,  
Banish all these. . . .

War or peace do you approve—  
With *united* forces move ;  
Courts which many columns rear  
Their fall[s] less fear.

Safer course these pilots run  
Who observe more stars than one,  
Ships with double anchor ti'd  
Securer ride.

Strength *united* firm doth stand,  
Knit in an eternal band ;  
But proud subjects' private hate  
Ruins a state !

Even the three-lined stave, in verses of five accents, was occasionally broken ; as in the complimentary letter sent to "old Ben" by the friendly painter, Sir William Burlase.

To paint thy worth, if rightly I did know it,  
And were but painter halfe like thee a poet,  
Ben, I would show it.

But, in this skill, my unskilful pen will tire,  
Thou and thy worth will still be found farre higher,  
And I a lier, &c.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [Printed in *English Poets*, ed. Chalmers, 1810, vol. vi. p. 624.—W. W. S.]

<sup>2</sup> [See *English Poets*, ed. Chalmers, vol. v. p. 481.—W. W. S.]



The Psalm-staves were broken almost as freely as those with continuous rime. Ben Jonson's Epitaph on one of the boys of Queen Elizabeth's chapel, may serve as a specimen :

Weep with me, all ye that read  
 This little story,  
 And know, for whom a teare you shed,  
 Death's self is sorry.

'Twas a child, that so did thrive,  
 In grace and feature,  
 As Heaven and Nature seem'd to strive,  
 Which own'd the creature, &c.

*B. Jonson, Epigrams, 120.*

His verses against Rime may furnish another example :

Rime, the rack of finest wits,  
 That expresseth but by fits  
 True conceit,  
 Spoiling senses of their treasure,  
 Cosening judgment with a measure,  
 But false weight,

Wresting words from their true calling,  
 Propping verse for fear of falling  
 To the ground,  
 Jointing syllables, drowning letters,  
 Fastning vowels, as with fetters  
 They were bound, &c.

He, that first invented thee,  
 May his joints tormented be,  
 Cramp'd for ever !  
 Still may syllables jarre with time,  
 Still may reason warre with rime,  
 Resting never, &c.

*B. Jonson, Underwoods, 47.*

The next specimen is taken from Donne's version of the 137th Psalm [stanza 9] :

And thou Babel, when the tide  
 Of thy pride,  
 Now a flowing, grows to turning,  
 Victor now, shall then be thrall,  
 And shall fall  
 To as low an ebb of mourning.

This stave was used by Marot, and may be found in the songs of every Protestant people in Europe. Gysbert Japicx, for example, thus sings his country's triumph over the Jesuit and Spaniard :

Lit | uwz nu | reys fro | lick sjong | e  
           Ad' | in jong | e  
 Oer | de wol | faert fen | uwz lân |  
 Hulst | mey schans | sen buwt | te-wirc | ken  
           Huws | en, tjerck | en  
 Falt | sün Heag | heit ijn | ne hân |.

Let us now right cheerly sing,  
 Old and young,  
 O'er the wel-fare of our land !  
*Hulst*, with bulwarks ! and with out-works !  
           Houses ! churches !  
 Fall'n is in his Highness' <sup>1</sup> hand, &c.

I quote from this old Friesish poet, to show the *real* rhythm of the stanza, which, as usual, is slurred over in the slovenly versification of our countryman. In every language but our own, it always lengthens the first, second, fourth, and fifth verses, and closes the third and sixth with an accented syllable. Hence the origin of this somewhat complicated stave is obvious. Its original stave was clearly formed from two riming trochaic tetrameters,<sup>2</sup> by interweaving a rime and *repeating* the first sections. By *breaking* the repeated sections we have the stave before us.

The broken staves, fashioned on the different combinations of the ballet-stave, were perhaps more popular with the foreigner than with our countrymen ; but the number of their varieties, to be found in English literature, is singularly great. The interwoven stave of four had generally its last verse shortened, as in the following example from Herbert—"the *good* George Herbert," as he is still fondly called by many of our countrymen :

<sup>1</sup> Prince Henry, the first member of the House of Orange, that took the title of Highness.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 473.

Sweet day ! so cool, so calm, so bright,  
 The bridal of the earth and sky,  
 The dew shall weep thy fall to-night,  
 For thou must die.

In this stave Pope made his first essay in versification,  
 (the Ode to Solitude,) and poor Byron his last,

'Tis time this heart should be unmov'd  
 Since others it has ceas'd to move, &c.

It was, perhaps, the most popular of our broken staves, but owed its popularity to a rather singular influence. The beautiful song, from which I first quoted, was inserted and eulogised in Isaac Walton's *Angler* !<sup>1</sup>

The ballet-stave of five was broken in different ways—sometimes in the first and third verses :

Go lovely rose !  
 Tell her, that wastes her time and me,  
 That now she knows,  
 When I resemble her to thee,  
 How sweet and fair she seems to be.

Tell her that 's young  
 And shuns to have her graces spied,  
 That, had'st thou sprung  
 In deserts, where no men abide,  
 Thou must have uncommended died, &c.

*Waller.*

Sometimes we have only the first verse shortened ;

The great decree of God  
 Makes every path of mortals lead  
 To this dark common period,  
 For what by-ways so-ere we tread  
 We end our journey 'mong the dead.

*Habington, Castara, part 3, Poem 6.*

The poet, from whom I last quoted, generally prefers the ballet-stave with *close rime*. Many of his songs display an elegance fully equal to their piety.

<sup>1</sup> ["Come, let me tell you what holy Herbert says of such days and shows as these ; and then we will thank God that we enjoy them. *Sweet day, so calm* &c.—Walton, *Complete Angler*, c. 5.—W. W. S.]

*Domine labia mea aperies.*

Noe monument of me remaine,  
 My memorie rust  
 In the same marble with my dust,  
 Ere I the spreading laurel gaine  
 By writing wanton or prophane, &c. . . .

Open my lippes, great God! and then  
 Ile soare above  
 The humble flight of carnal love—  
 Upward to thee I'll force my pen,  
 And trace no path of vulgar men! &c.

*Habington, Castara, part 3, Poem 1.*

*Vias tuas Domine demonstra mihi.*

My God! if thou shalt not exclude  
 Thy comfort thence,  
 What place can seem to troubled sense  
 So melancholy, dark, and rude,  
 To be esteem'd a solitude?

Cast me upon some naked shore,  
 Where I may tracke  
 Onely the print of some sad wracke,  
 If thou be there—though the seas roare,  
 I shall no gentler calme implore, &c.

*Id. Castara, part 3, Poem 17.*

Shakespeare, in the following song, seems to have had in view the virelay-stave,<sup>1</sup>

Who is Sylvia? what is she  
 That all our swains commend her?  
 Holy, fair, and wise is she,  
 The Heav'ns such grace did lend her,  
 That she might admired be.

Is she kind as she is fair,  
 For beauty lives with kindness?  
 Love doth to her eyes repair,  
 To help him of his blindness,  
 And, being help'd, inhabits there, &c.

*Two Gent. of Verona, 4. 2.*

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<sup>1</sup> See p. 648.

Many broken staves have been fashioned on the common elegiac stave. One variety was used by Sir William Jones ;

What constitutes a state ?  
 Not high-rai's'd battlement or labour'd mound,  
 Thick wall or moated gate,  
 Not cities proud with spires and turrets crown'd—  
 No—men, high-minded men, &c.

*Ode in imitation of Alcaeus.*

Another variety has been used by Briant, the American poet. His "Address to a Water-fowl," opens with the following staves,

Whither, mid'st falling dew,  
 While glow the heav'ns with the last steps of day,  
 Far through their rosy depths dost thou pursue  
 Thy solitary way ?

Vainly the fowler's eye  
 Might mark thy distant flight to do thee wrong.  
 As, darkly painted on the crimson sky,  
 Thy figure floats along.

Seek'st thou the plashy brink  
 Of weedy lake, or marge of river wide,  
 Or where the rocking billows rise and sink  
 On the chaf'd ocean side ? &c.

This is a very sweet and, at the same time, a truly American picture.

The original of the following stave, which is taken from one of Herbert's poems [called "Life"], was probably the elegiac stave, with the first and third verses doubled.

I made a posy,<sup>1</sup> as the day ran by—  
 Here will I smell my remnant out, and tye  
 My life within this band—  
 But time did beckon to the flowers, and they  
 By noon most cunningly did steal away,  
 And wither'd in my hand, &c.

In the original of the next stave, the first and third verses must have been *tripled*.

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<sup>1</sup> [For *posy*, the former edition has *nosogay*.—W. W. S.]

All gracious God, the sinner's sacrifice  
 A broken heart thou wert not wont despise,  
 But 'bove the fat of rammes or bulls to prize  
     An offering meet  
 For thy acceptance; O behold me right,  
 And take compassion on my grievous plight!  
 What odour can be, than a heart contrite  
     To thee more sweet? &c.

*Ben Jonson, Underwoods, 1. 2.*

The same fondness for jingle, which frittered our ballet-staves into shapeless heaps of rime, also affected our broken staves, though not to the same degree. The original of the following stave seems to belong to that class of ballet-staves, which were formed by adding a couplet to some one of the ordinary combinations. In the present case, the couplet is *subjoined* to the ballet-stave of six. Its first verse is not only broken, but also takes internal rime.

If thou beest born to see strange sights,  
 Things invisible to see,  
 Ride ten thousand daies and nights,  
 Till age snow white haire on thee—  
 Thou, when thou return'st, wilt tell me  
 All strange wonders that befell thee;  
     And swear,  
     No where  
 Lives a woman true and fair.

*F. Beaumont, A Song.*

In the following stave, from Turberville, the fifth and sixth verses are broken, and the first section of the seventh verse rimes with them.

If she had dained my good will,  
 And recompenst me with her love,  
 I would have beene her vassal still  
 And never once my heart remove;  
     I did pretend, pretend,  
     To be her friend,  
 Unto the *end*, but she refuse  
 My loving heart, and mee abuse.

*The Lover Abused renounceth Love.*

The repetition in the fifth line is a peculiarity often found in the broken verse of the sixteenth century.

## CHAPTER VII.

## THE SPENSER STAVES.

THE noble stanza which we owe to Spenser, is formed by adding an alexandrine to the ballet-stave of eight—such alexandrine riming with the last verse of the ballet-stave. By this *banding* of the rime, Spenser's stanza has all that connexion of parts which science demands, and which is so seldom to be met with in our later combinations. The sweeping length of the alexandrine furnishes also an imposing compass of sound, that to many ears is singularly delightful, and must, I think, convey to every one an impression of grandeur and of dignity.

When to these advantages of structure are added the associations, which Spenser's genius conferred upon it, we may understand the enthusiasm, that sees so many excellencies in Spenser's stanza, and pronounces it to be the most beautiful, as well as the most perfect of English combinations. Warton's notice of this stanza is almost the only exception to the eulogies of our critics; and his unfavourable judgment will the less surprise us, when we remember the loose notions he entertained on the subject of versification,<sup>1</sup> and that he has, in this very criticism, confounded our common ballet-stave of eight with the *ottava rima* of the Italians. His objection to the multiplicity of rimes—because our language does not “easily fall into a frequent repetition of the same termination”—

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<sup>1</sup> He, more than once, runs the verses of our older poets one into the other, and sometimes makes the fragment of a line stand for the whole. In other cases he writes a long passage *continuously*—apparently unaware that it divides itself into beautiful and scientific stanzas. Many of these oversights Price has corrected.

may be met by the criticism of Beattie, who maintains that our language, "from its irregularity of inflexion, and number of monosyllables, abounds in diversified terminations, and consequently renders our poetry susceptible of an endless variety of legitimate rimes." The advantages of *variety* may be best estimated, by considering at what cost they have, in many cases, been purchased; and when we call to mind how many poets have used this stanza, that it has embodied the happiest inventions of Shenstone and Thomson, of Beattie and of Byron, we may well doubt, if the difficulties of its construction be quite so formidable, as Warton apprehended.

The popularity of this stanza soon gave rise to numerous imitations. All of them were formed on one or other of two principles; either, as in Spenser's stanza, by *adding* an alexandrine to some well-known combination (generally to one of the ballet-staves), or by the *substitution* of such alexandrine for the last verse of the stanza. Such imitations I would class (together with Spenser's own stanza) under the general title of *Spenser-staves*—thus giving to these peculiarly English combinations the name of the great English poet, who first brought the principle into notice, on which they have been constructed.

The first class of Spenser-staves may best open with the stanza, which gave rise to all the others—the magnificent stanza, which the Faery Queen has immortalized. It is hard to choose, where choice is distracted by such varied excellence; but the following well-known imitation of the Italian has claims upon our notice, as affording the means, not only of comparing the two languages in a point wherein our own is generally thought deficient—I mean in point of harmony—but also of comparing the capabilities of the two favourite stanzas.

Eftsoons they heard a most delicious sound  
Of all that mote delight a dainty ear,  
Such as at once might not on living ground  
(Save in this Paradise) be heard elsewhere;  
Right hard it was for wight which did it hear  
'To rede what manner music that mote be;  
For all, that pleasing is to living ear,



Was there consorted in one harmonie—  
Birds, voices, instruments, winds, waters all agree.

The joyous birds, shrouded in chearful shade,  
Their notes unto the voice attemper'd sweet;  
Th' angelical soft trembling voices made  
To th' instruments divine response meet;  
The silver-sounding instruments did meet  
With the base murmur of the waters' fall;  
The waters' fall, with difference discreet,  
Now soft, now loud, unto the wind did call—  
The gentle, warbling wind low answered to all.

*Fairy Queen*, 2. 12. 70, 71.

Phineas Fletcher, in his very singular poem, entitled  
The Purple Island, has used a Spenser-stave, fashioned on  
the ballet-stave of six verses.

The cheerful lark, mounting from early bed,  
With sweet salutes awakes the drowsy night,  
The earth she left, and up to heav'n is fled,  
There chants her Maker's praises out of sight.  
Earth seems a mole-hill, men but ants to be,  
Teaching proud men, that soar to high degree,  
The further up they climb, the less they seem and see.

*Canto IX. st. 2.*

Giles Fletcher, "the Spenser of his age," as Quarles  
termed him, has left us another kind of Spenser-stave  
in the poem which celebrates Christ's Triumph upon Earth.

Her tent with sunny clouds was ciel'd aloft,  
And so exceeding shone with a false light,  
That Heav'n itself to her it seemed oft,  
Heav'n without clouds to her deluded sight;  
But clouds withouten heav'n it was aright;  
And as her house was built, so did her brain  
Build castles in the air, with idle pain,  
But heart she never had in all her body vain.

Like as a ship, in which no balance <sup>1</sup> lies,  
Without a pilot on the sleeping waves,  
Fairly along with wind and water flies,  
And painted masts with silken sails embraces,  
That Neptune's self the bragging vessel saves  
To laugh awhile at her so proud array,

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<sup>1</sup> Ballast.

Her waving streamers loosely she lets play,  
And flagging colours shine, as bright as smiling day ;

—Right so *Presumption* did herself behave, &c.

*Christ's Triumph on Earth, st. 34, 35.*

In this stave (and the remark applies also to the one preceding it) the final rime runs continuously through the three last verses. This jingling was avoided, and another more convenient stave formed on the ballet-stave of seven, by substituting an alexandrine for the last verse of the stanza. Milton has used this Spenser-stave.

Yet can I not persuade me thou art dead,  
Or that thy corse corrupts in earth's dark womb,  
Or that thy beauties lie in wormy bed,  
Hid from the world in a low delved tomb—  
Could Heav'n for pity thee so strictly doom?  
Oh no! for something in thy face did shine  
Above mortality, that show'd thou wast divine.

*On the Death of a Fair Infant, st. 5.*

Phineas Fletcher had preceded Milton in the use of this stanza some thirty years;<sup>1</sup> and in his Letter to his Cousin W. R., the same poet has given us another kind of Spenser-stave, similarly formed in the ballet-stave of *five* verses. Prior, in his Poem on the Campaign of 1706, has used a Spenser-stave, consisting of two elegiac staves and a couplet. The ballet-stave, which answers to this arrangement, had been used by Churchyard.

When bright Eliza rul'd Britannia's state,  
Widely distributing her high commands,  
And boldly wise, and fortunately great,  
Freed the glad nation from tyrannic bands,  
An equal genius was in Spenser found,  
To the high theme he match'd his noble lays,

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<sup>1</sup> In his "Lamentacyon" for the death of Henry the Seventh's Queen, written in 1503, Sir Thomas More uses the ballet-stave of seven, and often gives six accents to the last verse of the stanza. This verse always ends with the words "and lo now here she lies." It must have been often *convenient* to wedge this section into a verse of six accents; and as the poet's rhythm is in other respects loose, I consider the resemblance to the Spenser-stave owing rather to the tumbling rhythm of the period, than to any design of introducing novelty into English versification.

He travell'd England o'er on fairy ground,  
 In mystic notes to sing his monarch's praise—  
 Reciting wondrous truths in pleasing dreams,  
 He deck'd Eliza's head with Gloriana's beams.

But greatest Anna! while thy arms pursue  
 Paths of renown, and climb ascents of fame,  
 Which nor Augustus, nor Eliza knew,  
 What poet shall be found to sing thy name?  
 What numbers shall record, what tongue shall say  
 Thy wars on land, thy triumphs on the main?  
 O fairest model of imperial sway!  
 What equal pen shall write thy wondrous reign?  
 Who shall attempts and feats of arms rehearse,  
 Nor yet by story told, nor parallel'd by verse?

Prior professed to follow Spenser "in the manner of his expression and turn of his number, having only added one verse to his stanza," which he thought "made the number more *harmonious*." Had he stated *facility* to be his aim, he had shown more honesty. He has escaped the difficulties of Spenser's stanza, but at the same time has sacrificed all its *science* and not a little of its beauty.

Prior's name gave to this stanza a certain degree of popularity. Among others, it was used by Lowth in his *Choice of Hercules*, and by Denton in his poem on the *Immortality of the Soul*.

We have a few instances, in which the Spenser-stave was fashioned on combinations other than the ballet-stave, as in Rochester's poem on *Nothing* [stanzas 15 and 16].

Nothing, who dwell'st with fools in grave disguise,  
 For whom they rev'rend shapes and forms devise,  
 Lawn sleeves, and furs, and gowns, when they like thee look wise.

French truth, Dutch prowess, British policy,  
 Hibernian learning, Scotch civility,  
 Spaniards' dispatch, Danes' wit, are mainly seen in thee! &c.

Occasionally we have even the Psalm-staves ending with an alexandrine, as in Warton's verses on the *Suicide's Grave* [st. 1].

Beneath the beech, whose branches bare  
 Smit with the lightning's vivid glare  
 O'erhang the craggy road,

And whistle hollow, as they wave,  
 Within a solitary grave  
 A slayer of himself<sup>1</sup> holds his accurs'd abode.

The *broken* stave was closed with an alexandrine at a very early period. The following intricate specimen was used by Spenser in his *Epithalamion*, written on the marriage of the two Ladies Somerset, daughters of Lord Worcester.<sup>2</sup> It may be considered as compounded of a ballet-stave of 6, a peculiar ballet-stave of 5 with three terminations, another ballet-stave of 6, and a final couplet—the first and second staves receiving *band* from the rime. Each of the three staves breaks its last verse.

Open the Temple-gates unto my love !  
 Open them wide, that she may enter in,  
 And all the posts adorn, as doth behove,  
 And all the pillars deck with garlands trim,  
 For to receive this Saint with honour due,  
     That cometh in to you ;  
 With trembling steps and humble reverence  
 She cometh in before the Almighty's view—  
 Of her, ye Virgins, learn obedience,  
 When so ye come into these holy places,  
     To humble your proud faces.  
 Bring her up to th' High Altar, that she may  
 The sacred ceremonies there partake  
 The which do endless matrimony make,  
 And let the roaring organs loudly play  
 The praises of the Lord in lively notes ;  
     The whiles with hollow throats,  
 The Choristers the joyous anthem sing,  
 That all the woods may answer, and their echo ring, &c.

The stave which Cowley uses in his Ode [or Hymn] to Light is of the same kind, but of greater simplicity. The original was doubtless Waller's stave, consisting of two riming couplets.<sup>3</sup> I quote the ode at some length, as it is one of the few cases, in which poetry has succeeded in throwing grace and beauty over the stern truths of science.

<sup>1</sup> [In the former edition—"A wretched suicide holds," &c. But see T. Warton's *Poems*, Ode 6, in *English Poets*, ed. Chalmers, vol. xviii. p. 102.—W. W. S.]

<sup>2</sup> [Rather, written on *his own* marriage. The other poem is called *Prothalamion*.—W. W. S.]

<sup>3</sup> See p. 585.

—All the world's brav'ry that delights our eyes  
Is but thy sev'ral liveries,  
Thou the rich dye on them bestow'st,  
Thy nimble pencil paints this landscape as thou go'st.

A crimson garment in the rose thou wear'st,  
A crown of studded gold thou bear'st—  
The virgin lilies, in their white,  
Are clad but in the lawn of almost naked light.

The violet, Spring's little infant, stands  
Girt in thy purple swaddling-bands;  
On the fair tulip thou dost doat,  
Thou cloth'st them in a gay and party-colour'd coat, &c. &c. . .

Through the soft ways of heav'n and air and sea,  
Which open all their pores to thee,  
Like a clear river thou dost glide,  
And with thy living stream, through the close channels slide; . . .

But the vast ocean of unbounded day  
In th' empyrean heav'n does stay;  
Thy rivers, lakes, and springs below,  
From thence took first their rise, thither at last must flow.

It may be observed, before we close the chapter, that Chatterton has used the Spenser-staves, in the poems which he ascribed to Rowley. This anachronism would, of itself, be sufficient to prove the forgery, even though it had baffled every other test, which modern criticism has applied to it.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> ["But the most remarkable metre in the Rowley Poems is the ten-line stanza. . . . When Walpole objected to its use, Chatterton replied—'The stanza Rowley writes in, instead of being introduced by Spenser, was in use 300 years before.' . . . Chatterton ought to have the full credit of inventing this stanza, and it is only one of the proofs of his originality. . . . It is really the Spenserian stanza, with an alteration. If we denote the rhymes of this stanza by the letters *a, b, c*, we get the following formula to express it, viz. *a, b, a, b, b, c, b, c, c*. But the Rowley stanza is expressed by *a, b, a, b, b, c, b, c, d, d*. The reason for the alteration is clear, viz. to save trouble. . . . If only one double-pair of rhymes can be thought of, the rest are easily disposed of. . . . But whilst giving Chatterton full credit for his thought, I suppose that a few ears will much prefer the music of Spenser."—*Essay on the Rowley Poems*, by W. W. Skeat; vol. ii. p. xii.]

## CHAPTER VIII.

IN the present chapter it is intended briefly to review the history of our rhythms. But, instead of treating each rhythm separately, as heretofore, we shall more particularly endeavour to show the relation, which the several varieties bear to each other, as regards time and place. Perhaps this may be best done, and the dates and localities brought most satisfactorily before the reader, by laying before him a list of our early poets, accompanied with such slight sketches of their works, whether English, Latin, or Romance, as our very limited space will admit of. We shall thus be enabled to bring together those notices of our early literature, which have been scattered through the preceding pages, as they chanced to be suggested in the course of other inquiries.

English poetry, which naturally first claims our attention, may be traced to

## THE FIFTH CENTURY.

*The Gleeman* was born of decent (perhaps noble) parentage among the Myrgings, — a Gothic race, dwelling on the marches, which separated the Engle from the Swefe during the fourth and fifth centuries. In early life he accompanied Ealhild, daughter of Eadwine Lord of the Myrgings, to the court of Eormanic, the celebrated King of the East-Goten. Here his skill on the harp appears to have gained him favour, and we find him rewarded with a costly *beigh* or armlet. He afterwards visited the great Lords of the East-Goten, and such of the Slavish and Finnish tribes to the eastward, as were subject to their rule.

It was probably after the death of Eormanic in 375, that the Gleeman returned to his native tribe, and ob-

tained from Eadgils, successor and perhaps son of Eadwine, the land which had been holden by his father. We then find him in Italy with Ealfwine, another son of Eadwine, and probably one of the chiefs that followed Alaric in his inroad, A. D. 401; for the Gleeman's praises dwell chiefly on those suspicious virtues—his valour and liberality. From this period Gothic tribes, one after the other, gained a footing in the empire; and the Gleeman seems to have availed himself of the opportunity to wander through its provinces. Unless his story be interpolated, he reached, in his eastward progress, not only the Meads, but even the Hindoos.<sup>1</sup>

The song,<sup>2</sup> which records these wanderings, must have been written in the poet's old age, for *Ætla* is mentioned as King of the Huns, and his accession dates only in 433.

Our claim to rank the Gleeman as an English poet, may be told in few words. The Myrgings, though not Engle in the fourth century, were a bordering tribe; the Gleeman's song is English, or, as we *now* choose to call it, Anglo-Saxon; and the introduction is written by an Englishman, who had not yet left the continent. Here, then, we have a poem written in English, prefaced by an Englishman, and preserved in an English MS.—the writer living on the borders of the continental Ongle, and his descendants probably joining in the invasion and settlement of this island—if the poem be not English, to what Gothic dialect, extinct or living, may we refer it?

Besides the Gleeman's song, there are two others, which must date as early as the fifth century, I mean the Tale of Beowulf and the Fall of Finsburgh. The rhythms in these two poems are much shorter than those which are found in the Gleeman's song, and indeed have all those qualities, which, it has been elsewhere<sup>3</sup> conjectured, must have characterised the earliest rhythms of our language. But the lengthened and varied cadences of the Gleeman's song show a very matured system of versification, and will,

<sup>1</sup> [No; see p. 382, note 1.]

<sup>2</sup> See p. 374.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 365, and note 10.

perhaps, justify us in referring these short and abrupt rhythms, rather to the nature of the subject than to the earliness of the period. The sectional rime<sup>1</sup> is found in all the three poems, and there are also traces of the unaccented rime<sup>2</sup>—a clear proof of the antiquity of these appendages; for the poems were, in all fair probability, written before the Engle left the continent. They are the most venerable relics of our early literature—the oldest original compositions, extant in any of the European languages which survived or superseded the Greek and Latin.

During the sixth century, our forefathers were probably too busy with the Welshman to think much of poetry; at least, no poem has come down to us which can, with any show of reason, be assigned to this period. But if their poetical genius were awhile controlled by the sterner energies which the times called into action, it soon after broke forth with redoubled lustre, for the brightest name of Anglo-Saxon poetry is to be met with in

#### THE SEVENTH CENTURY.

*Cædmon* was neat-herd to the monastery of Whitby, then lately founded by Hild, kinswoman to Edwin, King of Northumberland. One day, as he was seated at table, the harp approached him; when, conscious of his deficiencies, he stole from the company, and took refuge in the neat-house. Here, as he slept, some one, he thought, approached him, and bade him sing. Encouraged by the stranger he made the attempt, and sung a hymn, which was next day repeated in the monastery, to the admiration of all who heard it. By the advice of the Abbess he was shorn; and as the Scriptures were expounded to him, he turned them into the beautiful verse, which has immortalised his memory. The talent, which our ancestors attributed to the inspiration of heaven, will now rather be ascribed to the poetical temperament, which is so often found united to a sensitive

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<sup>1</sup> See p. 122.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 140.



and retiring nature. His honoured and peaceful end is related by Bede; and his body, we are told by Malmabury, was found enshrined at Whitby, in the beginning of the twelfth century.

Only six of Cædmon's poems have reached us.<sup>1</sup> The subject of the first is the Creation; that of the second, the Fall of Man, to which is tacked, rather inartificially, a narrative of the events recorded in Genesis to the offering of Isaac; the third—the most sublime, but at the same time the most difficult of his works—relates the flight from Egypt and the destruction of Pharaoh; the fourth contains the story of Daniel; and the Torments of the Damned, and Christ's Harrowing of Hell, followed by his Ascension and Glory, are the subjects of the other two. Others of his works we must have lost, for we are told by Bede, that he also wrote on our Lord's Incarnation and his Passion; as also on the Advent of the Holy Ghost, and the teaching of the Apostles. What remains, is equal in length to about one half of the *Paradise Lost*.

The eighth century produced no English poet, whose name has reached us, unless we may refer Aldhelm to this period. *Aldhelm*, nephew of Ina, King of the West-Saxe, was taught Latin at Malmesbury by Maildulf the Scot, and Greek Dialectics and Rhetoric at Canterbury, by Archbishop Theodore, and the celebrated Adrian, abbot of St. Austin's. He was shorn in Maildulf's monastery, of which he became the second abbot; and when the diocese of Winchester was divided A.D. 705, he was made first bishop of Shireburn. His abbot's robe, his psalter, and his silver altar, were long kept as relics at Malmesbury, and were shown to Leland, when he visited that monastery. He is said to have written many English songs, interspersed with notices of Scripture. One of these was still sung by the people, in the days of Malmabury; and many of them are probably extant in the vast mass of devotional poetry, which

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<sup>1</sup> ["The collection of Biblical poems attributed to Cædmon is really the work of several hands."—Sweet, *Anglo-Saxon Reader*. p. 145.—W. W. S.]

lies unowned, and we may add unread, in our Anglo-Saxon MSS.

## THE NINTH CENTURY

gave birth to one, who, though better known as a statesman and a warrior, must not be forgotten as a poet—for in *Alfred* these three splendid characters were united. This great man was born at the royal manor of Wantage, in Berkshire, A.D. 848. He was his father's darling child, but in youth received no other instruction than could be gleaned from the popular songs, of which so many specimens have been laid before the reader. His after-life made amends for the deficiency; but the difficulties he struggled with and surmounted, are too well known to be here repeated. He succeeded his brother Ethelbald in 872, and died in the year 900.

Of Alfred's English poetry the only relic Time has left us is the version<sup>1</sup> of Boethius' metres. In the twelfth century was extant a collection of Proverbs, and another of Fables, both of which were ascribed to him; but neither of these productions is mentioned in any list of Alfred's works, and they were probably only some of the many compilations, which were made by his order. The Cotton MS. of the proverbs perished<sup>2</sup> in the fire, which destroyed so many of our manuscript treasures; but from the introduction, which had been transcribed by Wanley, it appears to have been written in the same kind of verse as Layamon's History, and must therefore have been an Old English version of the original work. Of the fables we possess a translation, which was made by Marie, a Norman poetess, about the year 1200. No English copy of them has yet been discovered.

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<sup>1</sup> See p. 348.

<sup>2</sup> There is, I believe, a copy of this work still extant at Cambridge, in the University library. [No; in Trinity College library; the MS. has since been stolen; see Old English Miscellany, ed. Morris, p. ix.—W. W. S.]

## THE TENTH CENTURY

produced the Brunanburgh War-song; <sup>1</sup> Edgar's Coronation-song; the two songs which commemorate the death of this monarch; and the splendid fragment which relates the defeat of the gallant Byrthnoth at Maldon, A.D. 993. To this century, too, I would refer the Tale of Judith, or, rather I should say, the *remains* of this magnificent poem. But no poet has left a name <sup>2</sup> behind him, unless the somewhat doubtful case of Archbishop Wulfstan be an exception.

*Wulfstan*, better known by his Latin name of *Lupus*, was translated from Worcester <sup>3</sup> to York in the year 1002, and died Archbishop in 1023; but as more than two-thirds of his life were spent before the year 1000, I have placed him in the tenth century. Upwards of fifty English homilies have been assigned to this prelate, and mixed up with these homilies in certain MSS. are found poetical paraphrases of the Lord's Prayer and the Doxology, which Wanley would ascribe to the same author. If this criticism be trustworthy, Wulfstan may claim to be considered as an English poet.

In these paraphrases the poet took some small portion of his original (the words *pater noster* for example), and amplified the sense in a certain number of alliterative couplets. Each of these divisions was considered complete in itself, and was always closed with a full couplet. As they sometimes contained only two or three couplets, we may readily understand the influence they exercised over the rhythm, and how much they contributed to make the middle pause subordinate to the final. Indeed to these paraphrases, and to the translation of such portions of Scripture as were

<sup>1</sup> See p. 357.

<sup>2</sup> [Yes: *Cynewulf* has left us his name. "There can be no doubt as to the authorship of the riddles of the Exeter Book, the first of them being a riddle on the name Cynewulf itself. Many of these riddles are true poems."—Sweet. Anglo-Saxon Reader, p. 179.—W. W. S.]

<sup>3</sup> The reader will be careful not to confound this Bishop of Worcester with the *St. Wulfstan*, to whom we probably owe that portion of the Chronicle quoted in p. 440. [Very few of the homilies are *really* by Wulfstan.—W. W. S.]

divided into verses,<sup>1</sup> and perhaps, in some slight degree, to the introduction of final rime, I would attribute the change in the relative importance of these two pauses, which led to the first great revolution in English versification.

The importance of this change can hardly be overrated. Not only did it enable our native rhythms to accommodate themselves to the flow of the different Latin "rhythmi," but it contained within itself the germ of almost every other change, which has since occurred in English versification. Had there been *no* foreign models to imitate, it must still have led the way to the invention of the stave, the riming couplet, and other similar novelties, no less surely in our own language than in the Icelandic.<sup>2</sup> The subordination of the middle pause first began to show itself a little before the year 1000, and at the close of the eleventh century, we find it very generally prevalent in English poetry.

To this century also we probably owe the first introduction of final rime. But the influence it exercised over our rhythms was by no means so great as might have been expected. If we may judge from such poems as have come down to us, it only occasionally controlled the punctuation.<sup>3</sup>

#### THE ELEVENTH CENTURY

seems to have been prolific of English poetry; and not a few of the poems, written during this period, are still extant. But though the works survive, the names and circumstances of the writers have rarely been so fortunate.

*Elfric*, raised to the Archbishopric of York by the favour of Knut, was one of the scholars of the celebrated Ethelwald, Bishop of Winchester. In early life he was sent, at the entreaty of a Thane named Ethelmær, to "a minster, which is called Cirnel;" and here he formed the design of turning the Lives of the Saints from Latin into English. The first set of Lives was, after a few years, followed by a second; and, at the urgent request of his friend Ethelmær,

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<sup>1</sup> See the quotation from the Paris Psalter, p. 563.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 564.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 579.

and of an Alderman Ethelward, he was induced (apparently with some misgivings) to add a third. The two first of these works were dedicated to Archbishop Sigeric.

The Lives of the Saints have been called prose, but, as far as I have read, they are written in regular alliterative couplets. Ælfric, indeed, professes to avoid those stately amplifications, so dear to the Anglo-Saxons; his object, as he tells us, being the profit of his reader, and not the vain display of his own learning.

The works of this prelate, whether Latin or English, well deserve publication.<sup>1</sup> It would be curious to see how far a man, whose good sense revolted from the dangerous novelty of Transubstantiation, was content to tolerate errors, which education had made familiar. His Lives of the Saints, too, would throw light on the manners and customs of the period, and in some cases possess considerable historical interest.

At the end of St. Martin's Life (which it seems he had twice written) are found the following Latin verses. They are the earliest specimen I have seen of the Alexandrine rhythmus.<sup>2</sup>

Olim | hæc trans | tuli : sicut | i val | ui |  
 Sed mo | do prec | ibus : obstric | tus ple | nius |  
 O Mar | tine | sancte : meri | tis præ | clare |  
 Juva | me mis | erum : meri | tis mod | icum |  
 Care | am quo | nevis : mihi | met noc | uis |  
 Casti | usque | vivam : nactus | jam ve | niam |.

Deor has recorded his name in a poem,<sup>3</sup> from which it may perhaps be gathered, that he was *scop*, or household poet, to the two Danish princes, Harold Harefoot and Hardy-Knut. Like the court-minstrels of the twelfth century, he seems to have holden a fief from the crown, the loss of which (if my translation may be trusted) gave rise to the song in question. He appears to have been suc-

<sup>1</sup> [Two sets of Ælfric's Lives of Saints have been published as Ælfric's Homilies by Mr. Thorpe, for the Ælfric Society. The third set is being printed by me for the Early English Text Society.—W. W. S.]

<sup>2</sup> See p. 517.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 608.

ceeded by a poet named *Heorren*,<sup>1</sup> who was probably patronised by the Confessor.

*Wulfwin Cada*. The Psalter, lately published at Oxford,<sup>2</sup> is translated partly in prose and partly in verse. At the end of the metrical portion [p. 439] is the following note,

"This poem of the noble King David's Psalter Wulfwin, sur-named Cada, the Lord's priest, wrote with his own hand (manu suâ conscripsit). Whoso readeth this writing, let him send up a prayer for his soul."

and, on the strength of this, Wulfwin has been represented as the *transcriber* of the MS.

Now first it may be questioned, whether the phrase *carmen conscribere* ever signified *mere* transcription; but though it did, Wulfwin may still put in a claim as author, for there are instances of Anglo-Saxon copyists translating or glossing their text, and yet only mentioning themselves as transcribers. That Wulfwin *was* the author of the metrical version is probable for the following, among other reasons.

The prose version prefaces each psalm with some account of its history, general scope, and tendency; and often paraphrases the Latin, so as to show more clearly its doctrinal or prophetic meaning. The metrical version has no prefaces, and, though generally literal, exhibits some cases of glaring misconstruction.<sup>3</sup> I would infer, therefore, that the prose-version was made by a man of reading, and the other by one who was a much better poet than scholar. I think it probable, that Wulfwin copied from some MS. the prose version as far as it went, and when it failed him, drew upon his own resources. Some of the psalms are rendered with singular terseness and elegance.

There is one other poet of this period whose *name* has been lately recovered, though his works unfortunately are not yet forthcoming. Some two or three years ago was

<sup>1</sup> Or *Heorrenda*; p. 608, note 2.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 563, n. 1.

<sup>3</sup> See Psalm 8. v. 1. Psalm 77. v. 43. Psalm 103. v. 1., &c. &c.

found a Latin MS., treating of the exploits of Hereward, the hero who braved the power of William when that power was at its strongest. The writer quotes, as his chief authority, the English work of *Leofric*, Hereward's chaplain. He appears to have lived with his patron at Bourne in Lincolnshire, and to have written, among other subjects, on the warriors of our early history, and also, it would seem, on the Ettyns and Giants of our old Mythology. The songs relating to Hereward, which (as a contemporary historian informs us) were sung in the streets, and at the ale-stake, were, in all probability, the productions of this poetical chaplain. The Latin MS. will, I believe, be shortly published at Rouen, under the patronage of the French government.<sup>1</sup>

#### THE TWELFTH CENTURY

was distinguished throughout Europe by an extraordinary display of mental energy. In England, unfortunately, but little of this energy was directed to our native literature. Norman Romance was the language of the court; and Latin the only medium through which our scholars condescended to instruct their readers. Still, however, English poetry was not wholly neglected, and we may yet muster the names of some half dozen poets, whose labours have come down to us.

*Godric*, the sainted hermit of Durham, has left behind him three short hymns, two of which have been already laid before the reader.<sup>2</sup> He was born at Walpole in Norfolk, and died aged in 1170. His life may be found in the *Acta Sanctorum*.

*Layamon*, son of Levenath (or, according to the *Otho*

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<sup>1</sup> Edited, I am told, by Mr. Wright, the gentleman who discovered the MS. and to whose politeness I have been indebted, while this sheet was passing through the press, for a perusal of this very curious, and as yet unpublished work. [Published with the title *De Gestis Herwardi Saxonis*, as an Appendix to Gaimar's Chronicle (Caxton Society), 1850; see also *Biographia Britannica Literaria* (Anglo-Saxon Period); by T. Wright, 1842; p. 15.—W. W. S.]

<sup>2</sup> See p. 443.

MS., of Luke), lived as priest with "the good knight" of Ernley, near Radestone on the banks of Severn. Here, it appears, he read a book, which inspired the happy thought of writing a British History. He travelled in search of MSS., and took for his authorities, 1st, the English book which Bede wrote, 2ndly, the Latin book of St. Albin (Alcwin), and, 3rdly, the book of our English apostle St. Austin. In the Caligula MS. the list is somewhat different.—1st, Bede's English book, 2ndly, the Latin book of St. Albin and St. Austin, and, 3rdly, the book of the Frankish clerk Wace. The "English book" is probably Alfred's translation of the Ecclesiastical History, but I do not know what work of St. Austin is here referred to. When the two MSS. are published, as they shortly will be,<sup>1</sup> we may perhaps learn how far the author was indebted to Wace's History.

In my first notice of Layamon's poem,<sup>2</sup> I was in doubt as to the locality of Ernley, but on further search, there was found a Redstone Ferry close to Areley Regis in North Worcestershire. On turning to Nash, it appeared that the similarity of names had already led him to claim Layamon as a Worcestershire poet, and doubtless with good reason, as Areley was formerly written *Armleag*.

It may now perhaps be a question, what kind of dialect was originally spoken in Worcestershire. Layamon *may* have brought his peculiarities of speech from Gloucestershire; but if he were a native of Ernley, or its neighbourhood, the Southern Dialect probably reached to the line of watershed between the Trent and Severn, and one of the most distinguished of the Mercian tribes, the Wicware, must have been *Seax*<sup>3</sup> in origin.

Of Layamon's patron, we still only know, that

The good knight is dust,  
And his sword is rust.

<sup>1</sup> [Layamon's Brut was edited by Sir F. Madden, and published in 1847. Sir F. Madden's Preface should be consulted.—W. W. S.]

<sup>2</sup> See p. 406, note 3.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 481.



The proprietors of Ernley are not recorded, till years after poet and patron were sleeping in the churchyard.

*Pope Adrian* is said to have written a metrical version of the Lord's Prayer, which is quoted by Strutt in his "Manners and Customs, &c." It is added, "this, together with the Crede also in rime, was at that time used in all churches in England with universal approbation."

As Strutt was a man of research, he doubtless had *some* authority for this statement. The poem is written in the same kind of verse as the Hule and Ni3tengale, and is, if genuine, the earliest specimen of such metre in our language. Adrian's original name was Breakspear.

*Ormin* was a Regular Canon, and (it would seem from his dialect) a member of some priory in the East of England. At the request of his brother Walter, who was a Canon in the same House, he undertook to turn into English "nigh all the Gospels, that are in the Mass-book, through all the year at Mass," each of them accompanied by an exposition of its meaning.

After an affectionate address<sup>1</sup> to his brother, there followed in the MS. a list of the "Gospels" which had been versified. This list is now imperfect, two leaves having been torn out, but it still contains the titles of no less than 242. The whole number was probably 365, that is, one for every day in the year.

The MS. has written in it the name of some Dutchman, dated Breda 1656, and was probably carried over to Holland by one of the fugitive loyalists. It afterwards came into the hands of Junius, by whom it was given to the Bodleian library. It seems to have been the first volume of Ormin's work, and contains only thirty-one of his "Gospels."

The Ormulum (for so Ormin named the work from his abbreviated name *Orm*) is the most valuable specimen left us of our Old English dialect. It is curious, also, as being the first imitation in our language of the Middle-Age "rhythmi"; and deserves notice also as a storehouse of

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<sup>1</sup> See p. 499.

popular divinity. It seems to have been intended for a Harmony of the New Testament, the volume now extant bringing us to the imprisonment of John. It was certainly meant for public reading, and (probably on this account) was looked upon with some degree of jealousy by his brother-churchmen.

The MS. may have been written at the close of the twelfth century.

*Arreck* is the name of a poet, which occurs in Capgrave's Life of St. Catharine,<sup>1</sup> referred to by Park, in one of his annotations to Warton. Capgrave tells us, that in the days of Peter King of Cyprus, and Pope Urban the Fifth, an Austin of Lynn named Arreck, found in Cyprus a life of the Saint, written in Greek. This life he translated first into Latin, and afterwards into English verse. The English version (which Arreck left unfinished) Capgrave professes to have "shown more openly,"—that is, accommodated to the language of his day.

Now in the Auchinlech MS. there is a modernised copy of St. Margaret's Life,<sup>2</sup> and then follows, in the same kind of metre and dialect, an imperfect Life of St. Catharine, which I take to be Capgrave's original. If so, Capgrave must be mistaken in his dates, for the Auchinlech MS. is older than the papacy of Urban the Fifth. If, as seems probable, the lives of the two saints are of equal antiquity, we may, I think, refer the life of St. Catharine to the twelfth century; and Arreck may, in such case, be author of both. It is possible that Urban the Fifth may be a mistake for Urban the Third; but a reference to the MSS. would best clear up the difficulty.

#### THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY,

though it produced much English poetry, has left us, in most cases, ignorant of the names and circumstances of the writers. The poems, too, lose much of their importance,

<sup>1</sup> MS. Coll. Gresh. 315, and Rawlinson MS. 118.

<sup>2</sup> For the older copy of this work, see p. 507.

as regards our present inquiry, inasmuch as the MSS. are generally of the fourteenth century, and therefore little to be trusted (owing to the disuse of the final *e*) in any question relating to the rhythm. In such MSS., however, as were really written in this century, we find the flow of the Latin "rhythmi" modified by our native rhythms, much in the same manner as at the present day. Specimens of the tumbling metres, which afterwards became so common, are rarely met with; and lines with defective or supernumerary accents are only to be found in poems which were written at the close of the century. No alliterative poem has yet been discovered which can be referred to this period.

*John of Guildford* is mentioned in an Oxford MS.<sup>1</sup> as the author of an English poem, entitled *Le passyun d' Jesus Crist*; and there is little doubt that he also wrote the *Hule* and *Niztengale*.<sup>2</sup> He seems to have lived in the reigns of John and Henry the Third, for in the last-mentioned poem there is a prayer for a "King Henri," and the MS. was written early in the thirteenth century.

In the *Hule* and *Niztengale*, reference is made to one *Nichol of Guildford*,<sup>3</sup> who appears to have been an English poet. I have not met with the name elsewhere.

*Hending, son of Marcolf*, was author of the song quoted in p. 612. The MS. from which it was taken is of the fourteenth century, but all the poems, whose date can be ascertained, belong to the thirteenth; perhaps then we may infer that *Hending's* song, as it now appears with introductory and concluding stanzas, belongs to the same period. If so, *Hending* probably lived in the first half of the thirteenth century, for fifty or sixty years at least must have elapsed, before the poet would require to be formally introduced to the reader, as we find him in the MS.

*Hending* is quoted by *Wynton*, but the quotation is not found in the song, as now extant;

Al the l w gud, and su  gud fine  
Makes al the soum gud, said Endyne.

*Book ix.*

<sup>1</sup> *Jea.* MS. 76.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 427.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 429.

*Robert of Gloucester* was probably a monk of Gloucester Abbey, and, in the wars waged by the barons against Henry the Third, appears, like most of his fellow-townsmen, to have been a strong partisan of the former. The latest fact mentioned in his Chronicle occurred in 1278 [1297], when it was probably written.

The MS. from which Hearne published his edition was, I suspect, a very corrupt copy of the original; but, with all its faults, it tells our national story with a simplicity, and occasionally with a dramatic power, that have been much undervalued. In sketching the character of our kings this chronicler is sometimes singularly happy.

✓ *Kendale* appears from his name to have been born in Westmoreland. In the opening of his *Tristrem*,<sup>1</sup> he tells us that he visited Thomas of Ercyldon, from whom he learnt the facts of the story, which it would seem he afterwards versified. Robert of Brunne, however, gives *Kendale* and Ercyldon a joint-interest in the execution of the work, that is to say, in the choice of stanza and of language;<sup>2</sup> and our northern brethren, improving on the hint, boldly claim the poem as Scotch property. But the internal evidence is almost decisive against such a claim. The passage in Brunne is irreconcilable with the poem, on any hypothesis; and was, most probably, written from a vague recollection of the opening stanza.

*Michael of Kildare* has recorded himself as author of the hymn quoted in p. 600. The satire, too, in p. 616, was, no doubt, written by him; and, probably also, the well known satire called *The Land of Cockayne*, which immediately precedes these two poems in the MS. [MS. Harl. 913]. The opening lines of the last-mentioned satire,

Fur in see by West Spaygne  
Is a lond ihothe Cockayne,

point clearly to Ireland as the locality of the poem; and the same peculiar humour, and the same hatred of the monks, may be traced in this as in the other satire.

<sup>1</sup> See p. 465.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 566.

Michael's allusion to the White-Friar, I once thought<sup>1</sup> excluded Drogheda from any chance of being his residence. But the meaning was probably mistaken; for in the next stave is the line

*Minor without! and Preacher within!*

and at Drogheda there was a house of Dominicans or Preachers within the walls, and a house of Minors or Franciscans without. If the line just quoted express indignation at the preference shown the Preacher, Michael may have been a Minorite. He certainly was neither Dominican nor Carmelite, for both black and white friars are lashed unsparingly. As, however, the Crutched Friars had a house at Drogheda, he may have been a Cross-bearer.

In wit and caustic humour, Ireland has produced few poets superior to Michael, that is, supposing "The Land of Cockaigne" to have been really written by him.

#### THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY

furnishes us with a very copious list of English poets. With many of them the reader must be too well acquainted to require any other notice, than the mere mention of their names. This century is also distinguished by the introduction of certain foreign rhythms, as the couplet metre of five accents and the ballet-staves, and by the re-appearance of our old alliterative metre, or, to speak more correctly, by a certain modification of it. The first name, that appears on the list, is

*Robert Manning* of Brunne (now Bourne) in Lincolnshire, a Gilbertine Canon of Sempringham, in his native county. He had already been in this House fifteen years, under the Priors John of Camelton and John of Clinton, when, under their successor Prior Philip, he began his translation of Wadington's Manuel,<sup>2</sup> A.D. 1303. He de-

<sup>1</sup> See p. 616, n. 2.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 698. [Robert of Brunne's *Handlyng Synne* (the translation here referred to) was edited by Mr. Furnivall for the Roxburghe Club in 1862. His

dicates this translation to all Christian men, and specially to the "good men" of Bourne and the "fellowship" of Sempringham. The dedication is dated from Brym-wake in Kestevan, which was probably some dependency of his monastery, and where he seems to have finished his work.

He afterwards removed to the Gilbertine priory of Sixhille, also in Lincolnshire; and here, at the instance of Prior Robert of Malton, began his riming Chronicle of England. The first part, in verses of four accents, is a translation of Wace; the second, in Alexandrines, is a version of Langtoft's Chronicle.<sup>1</sup> It seems to have been finished in the year 1338.

*Adam Davie*, marshal of Stratford-le-bow, announces himself as the author of certain visions, which are found in the Bodleian MS. Laud 72, and appear to be, for the most part, complimentary of Edward the Second.<sup>2</sup> In the same MS. is a version of the romance entitled the Siege of Jerusalem, and other poems, which have also been ascribed to Davie, but I know not on what authority. The romance is written in verses of four accents, and the visions in a very loose rhythm, which may, perhaps, be considered as the corresponding tumbling metre.

*John* appears to be the name of the poet who wrote, in praise of his lady-love Annot, the song quoted in p. 580.

*William of Shoreham* is said to have written English poetry in the early half of this century. Sir F. Madden informs us,<sup>3</sup> that the MS. is now at Edinburgh, in private hands.<sup>4</sup>

*Robert de Wottoun*, according to Henry Wharton, wrote

translation of Peter Langtoft's Chronicle was edited by T. Hearne in 1725, and reprinted in 1820.—W. W. S.]

<sup>1</sup> Langtoft was at "Cantebrige," with Alexander Bruce (brother of Robert), afterwards High Dean of Glasgow. He regrets his untimely fate, giving him high praise for his success in art. See Rob. of Brunne's translation, ed. Hearne, p. 337.

<sup>2</sup> [Ed. Furnivall, E. E. T. S., 1878.—W. W. S.]

<sup>3</sup> See the Preface to William and the Werwolf.

<sup>4</sup> [Shoreham's Poems were edited for the Percy Society by Mr. T. Wright, 1849.—W. W. S.]

certain of the Lives of the Saints in a translation of the Golden Legend; see Lambeth MS. No. 223.—Todd's Johnson, preface, p. 39.

*Randal Higgenet.* The MS.<sup>1</sup> of the Chester plays contains a copy of a proclamation, dated 24 H. 8, which states them to have been written in the mayoralty of Sir John Arnwaie, by a monk of Chester, named Henry Frauncis; and the same monk is also said to have obtained from Pope Clement forty days of pardon for all who heard them. But a note in a later hand informs us, that Arnwaie was mayor in the year 1327, and that Randal Higgenet was the author. Consistently with this latter account, we find in a MS. list<sup>2</sup> of the Chester mayors the following notice appended to Arnwaie's mayoralty in 1327:

The Witson playes made by one Don Randal Higgenet, a monk of Chester abbey, who was thrise at Rome before he could obtayne leave of the pope to have them in the English tongue.

the words in italics being additions in a later hand.

It is probable that the plays were written in 1327 by Higgenet; and that the objections made to their representation were overcome in the papacy of Clement the Fifth, by the joint exertions of Higgenet and Frauncis. Higgenet, it may be observed, is still a common name at Chester.

*Richard Rolle* of Hampole was an Augustine monk and hermit, and lived near Doncaster. Lydgate tells us, that he made a translation of the Stimulus Conscientiæ, probably the one noticed in p. 524 [note 1].<sup>3</sup> It is very doubtful if he wrote any other English poem, though many have been ascribed to him. He died in 1349.

*Colman* is mentioned as the author of [a version of] *Guy*, Earl of Warwick; in *Harding's Chronicle*, p. 211.

*Gilbert Pilkington.* Wilhelm Bedwel, rector of Totten-

<sup>1</sup> Harl. 2013.

<sup>2</sup> Harl. 2025.

<sup>3</sup> The other translation I would ascribe to Ascheburne. See p. 693. [Hampole's Prick of Conscience was edited by R. Morris in 1863.—W. W. S.]

ham, and one of the translators of the Bible, published the Turnament of Tottenham in 1631; and stated it to have been "written long since by Mr. Gilbert Pilkington, at that time, as some have thought, parson of the parish." An English song in the same MS., entitled *Passio Domini nostri Jesu Christi* was subscribed *quod dominus Gilbertus Pilkington*, and this, joined to the tradition, amply warranted the conclusion Bedwel came to.

The MS.,<sup>1</sup> which is now at Cambridge, has been ascribed<sup>2</sup> to the early part of the fourteenth century. But whether this criticism be allowed or not, I agree with Bedwel in thinking, that the *song* could not have been written later than the reign of our third Edward, when the dangerous pastime, which it celebrates, was forbidden by statute. Warton, indeed, will have it to have been written in the reign of Henry the Eighth! He ridicules Bedwel's notion that it was meant for a burlesque description of a real country jousting, and considers it to be a satire on the knightly tournay; but Bedwel's supposition is, I think, far more consistent with the character both of the poem and of the age.

*William Herbert* paraphrased a collection of hymns and antiphones; and the MS., we are told by Warton, was in his day to be found in the library of Mr. Farmer, at Tusmore, in Oxfordshire.

Leland mentions a divine and schoolman of this name; and a Herbert is also recorded as having sung the Song of Colbrand and the Gest of Queen Emma before Bishop Orleton in the Prior's Hall at Winchester, A.D. 1338. This latter may possibly have been Warton's poet.

*Thomas Vicary*, of Wimborne, Dorsetshire, wrote the romance of Apollonius of Tyre, a fragment of which came, by a singular accident, into the possession of Dr. Farmer. Steevens, in his annotations to *Pericles*, quotes a few verses, which appear to have eight accents each, and to rime by couplets—at the same time taking the interwoven rime.

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<sup>1</sup> Univ. Lib. Ff. 5. 48.

<sup>2</sup> See Pref. to the Turnament of Tottenham. Pickering, 1836.



If such were really the law of the metre, it well deserves the reader's notice.<sup>1</sup>

*William* was the name of the poet, who translated the romance of William and the Werwolf. He was patronized by Humphrey Bohun, Earl of Hereford, and must have written the poem between the years 1335 and 1360.<sup>2</sup>

*Lawrence Minot* was the author of certain songs, commemorating the triumphs of our third Edward.<sup>3</sup> He appears from his dialect to have been a Lincolnshire man. His songs were edited by Ritson.

*Robert Langland*, born at Mortimer's Cleybury in Shropshire, was a priest, and fellow of Oriel College, and afterwards a Benedictine at Worcester.<sup>4</sup> When he entered the monastery he seems to have taken the name of John Malvern.<sup>5</sup> His visions were written in 1362.<sup>6</sup>

*John Gower* is generally considered as Chaucer's senior. He died in 1402. His only English poem is the *Confessio Amantis*.

*Jeffrey Chaucer* was born in London about the year 1340, and died in the year 1400.

*John Barbour*, archdeacon of Aberdeen, had a passport to visit Oxford in 1357, and a second passport in 1365 to pass through England on his way to St. Denis. In 1375 he wrote the *Bruce*, and died aged, in 1396.

Gordon, in the preface to his poetical history of Robert Bruce, mentions that he made use of a MS. poem on the same subject, written in rimes like Chaucer's by *Peter Penton* in 1369. See pref. to Wyntoun's *Chronicle*, p. xxix.

*Sir Hugh of Eglynton*, otherwise Hugh of the Palace, wrote the *Gest of Arthur*, the *Aunter of Gawaine*, and the

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 474, 598.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 448.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 583.

<sup>4</sup> See p. 455.

<sup>5</sup> If Langland *did* assume this name, he must have written the continuation of Higden's *Polychronicon* in the Bennet MS. 14, for it is ascribed in the manuscript to a Worcester monk, called John Malvern. [All this is very improbable. The poet's name was certainly *William*, not *Robert*; and probably *Langley*, not *Langland*. Some parts of the poem were written almost as late as 1390.—W. W. S.]

<sup>6</sup> See p. 457, n. 4.

Epistle of Susan. Since my notice of this last poem,<sup>1</sup> I have found it printed in Laing's Early Poetry of Scotland. This critic, it appears, and his friend Mr. Chalmers consider the old poems,<sup>2</sup> printed by Pinkerton, to be part of the Aunter of Gawaine, but no doubt erroneously.<sup>3</sup> Mr. Chalmers adds, "He (Sir Hugh) flourished under David the Second; he is supposed to have died about the year 1381. As he was a busy knight in his day, so there are many notices respecting him."

*Thomas Ascheburne*, a Carmelite of Northampton, has been considered as author of a poem, "*De contemptu mundi*,"<sup>4</sup> on the strength of the following note:—

Script. a fr̄ Tho de Acheb'ne ord. fūm b° m<sup>le</sup> genitr. dei de mo |  
Carm. conventus Northampton A° 1384 congest ex . . . . . |

the perpendicular line showing where the page has been cut by the binder.

In the blank leaf we have another note written in pencil as follows,

This MS. is merely a copy of *Hampole's Stimulus Conscientiæ*.

At fol. 100. is the passage on the pains of Hell, quoted by Hearne, &c. *F. M. (Sir F. Madden.)*

I do not, however, see any reason for degrading Ashburn into a mere transcriber. There were *two* English versions of the *Stimulus Conscientiæ*; and if the one alluded to in p. 524 be Hampole's, the present, which is written in verses of four accents, may very well be Ashburn's. Hampole could hardly have written both.

*William of Nassyngton* translated the *Speculum Vitæ* of Friar John of Waldby, Wycliffe's opponent. MS. Reg. 17. c. 8. William was a proctor at York. The transcript in the King's Library was written in 1418, so that William may have written it in the 14th century.<sup>5</sup>

*Hilton the Hermit* has a long mystical poem ascribed to him, in the Cotton MS. Faustina, B. vi. It is written in verses of four accents, and in a northern dialect.

<sup>1</sup> See p. 463.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 573.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 458.

<sup>4</sup> Cott. MS. Ap. VII.

<sup>5</sup> [See Warton, *Hist. Eng. Poetry*, 1871, ii. 117.—W. W. S.]

Tanner mentions a Walter Hylton, who was monk of Shene in Surrey, and afterwards D.D. and Canon of Thurgarton. He died A.D. 1395. But I cannot identify him with the poet.

These are the only writers of English verse, previous to the year 1400, whose names I have found recorded.<sup>1</sup> Were, indeed, our MSS. examined with care, I have little doubt that the number might be tripled. The present scanty list must form a very small proportion of those, who contributed to fill the many collections, still extant, of early English poetry.<sup>2</sup>

We must now turn our attention to the works of our Latin poets, which have been much too generally neglected, in inquiries connected with the history of our literature. Writers of Latin "rhythmi" have influenced, in a very marked manner, both the sentiments and the versification of English poetry. Many of the rhythmical models, which our critics have perversely sought for, in some one or other of the Romance dialects, were familiar to our Latinists, long before any of these languages possessed a literature.

Aldhelm is generally considered as the first Englishman that wrote in Latin. Besides poems of some length in hexameter verse, he has left us specimens of two different kinds of "rhythmus"—the Iambic Colophon<sup>3</sup> and the Dimeter Iambic, both riming by couplets. Other examples of the latter rhythmus have come down to us from his pupil Ethelwald, and also from his friend Winfrid, better known as St. Boniface,<sup>4</sup> the apostle of Germany. Bede occasionally rimes his hexameters in the middle, or by

<sup>1</sup> Two or three other names have been mentioned by our critics, which, however, would not bear the test of inquiry. For example, we are told, by Tanner and Ritson, that one *Taystek* wrote a poem on the decalogue. On turning to the MS. (Harl. 1022) we find "a sermon" in prose upon this subject. A short poem precedes the "sermon," though wholly unconnected with it, and hence the blunder.

By the aid of false spelling this worthy monk stands sponsor to no less than three poets, to wit, *Taystek*, *Gaystek*, and *Gatrike*.

<sup>2</sup> [See the list of Early English Poems in Hazlitt's edition of Warton's History of English Poetry, vol. ii., p. 28.—W. W. S.]

<sup>3</sup> See p. 424.

<sup>4</sup> See p. 424.

couplets; and writes the imperfect Trochaic Tetrameter in rhythmus,<sup>1</sup> sometimes with rime, sometimes without. Alcwin, the tutor and friend of Charlemagne, commonly wrote in heroic or elegiac verse, but he has also left us a specimen of adonics, and another of the curious rhythmus noticed in p. 515, apparently that of the imperfect Trochaic Trimeter.

This, though a very imperfect, list contains the names of the more distinguished English scholars of the seventh and eighth centuries. Their accentual rhythms have a peculiarity which deserves notice, as being directly opposed to the great law of Anglo-Saxon versification. Whenever they alliterate the rhythmus, the alliteration is always subordinate to the rime, and often rests on unaccented syllables. Perhaps we may best account for this practice, by considering the sources, from which our ancestors got their first knowledge of the classical languages.

The southern school, or that of Canterbury, owed its existence chiefly to Archbishop Theodore, and Adrian, the venerable head of St. Austin's abbey. To these two foreigners—the one an African, the other an Asiatic Greek—our country was mainly indebted for the scholarship, which, during four centuries, took precedence in Europe. The northern or rival school was founded by the Irish ecclesiastics, who, chiefly from Iona, evangelized the north of England. Some of their teachers were settled in the southern counties; and we have seen that Aldhelm's earliest tutor was Maildulf the Scot, first abbot of Malmesbury.<sup>2</sup> Now, final rime has ever been the great characteristic of Celtic verse; and, whenever it admitted alliteration, it always kept it subordinate. It is probable, therefore, that the alliteration, introduced into the accentual verse of our early Latinists, was borrowed from their Celtic teachers, and differed no less in origin than in kind from that which was used in their vernacular poetry. When the Irish system

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<sup>1</sup> See p. 474.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 676. It may be observed, that *Malmesbury* is merely a corruption of *Maildulf's bury*.

gave way before the increasing influence of the southern school, this subordinate alliteration seems to have fallen gradually into disuse.

Our scholars of the ninth and tenth centuries were every way inferior to the men who preceded them. Bricstan, præcentor of Croyland, wrote an elegy on the ruins of his burnt and desolated monastery; Fridegode of Canterbury wrote in hexameters the Life of St. Wilfrid; and Wulfstan, præcentor of Winchester, the Lives of Bishop Ethelwald and St. Swithin. The cold classicality of these and of other contemporary poems (which still survive, either entire or in extract,) was doubtless the chief reason, why they have come down to us. We might have profited more by the preservation of some of the many "rhythmi," which Leland met with when ransacking the Monkish libraries, and whose merit he is often obliged to admit, notwithstanding his scholar-like prejudice against any but classical versification. Serlo's caustic satire against the monks of Canterbury *may* perhaps be still extant, in some of our neglected MSS. It could hardly fail to be interesting.

In the eleventh century, John the Grammarian wrote a poem in praise of Paris, where he had been studying; Reginald, of Canterbury, wrote the Life of St. Malchus in hexameters, which occasionally take the mixed rime; and both Osbern and Eadmer—Canterbury monks, whom the Italians, Lanfranc and Anselm, had the good sense to appreciate—distinguished themselves by the same accomplishment. But it was the twelfth century, which was the golden æra of English scholarship. Perhaps not even the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries produced men of deeper reading—scholars, to whom the Latin language and literature was more habitually familiar—than an age, which many of our countrymen consider as one of almost unmitigated barbarism.

It is not, however, with the classical poems of this period we have now to do. We may pass by the Life of St. Alban by Robert of Dunstable, the elegies and songs of Henry of Huntingdon, the Architremon of Hanville—half prose, half metre—and even the epics of Joseph of

Exeter; but the "*carmina rhythmica*" have more immediate reference to the subject before us. Two writers, neither of them undistinguished, and one of them, if we may trust the impression made on his contemporaries, *the* man of his century—I mean Lawrence, Prior of Durham, and Walter Mapes, Archdeacon of Oxford—have left us numerous specimens of this "sibilant" versification. In their songs we find not only specimens of our psalm-staves, but also other specimens of mixed rime fully as complicated, and apparently as anomalous, as any that was used by the Troubadour. The hymns of the poetical Prior are for the most part in MS. They are much inferior to the jovial songs and biting satires of the Archdeacon. The latter, indeed, manages both rhythm and rime with admirable skill; his numbers seem almost to reel beneath his merriment and sarcasm.

Our MSS. of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries are filled with Latin rhythm, written in an endless variety of stave and metre. But as the chief peculiarities both of our English and of our Romance versification were by this time fully developed, it will be the less necessary to enter upon an investigation of this neglected and much despised portion of our literature. We will rather hasten to take such a view, as our scanty limits will allow, of our Romance poetry and its versification.

The earliest writer of Norman verse, whose works have survived him, is *Philippe de Than*, One of his poems, entitled *De Creaturis*,<sup>1</sup> is dedicated to his uncle Humphrey de Than, chaplain of Hugh,<sup>2</sup> the King's Seneschal; and his other, the *Bestiaire*, to the Queen of the same monarch—our Henry the First. *Samson de Nanteuil* soon afterwards translated Solomon's Proverbs<sup>3</sup> for "his lady" Adelaide, the wife of a Lincolnshire gentleman; and about the middle of the century *Geoffroi Gaimar* wrote his History of the Anglo-Saxon kings<sup>4</sup> from English, Norman, and

<sup>1</sup> Nero, A. v. [Printed in *Popular Treatises on Science*, ed. T. Wright, 1841.—W. W. S.]

<sup>2</sup> Hugh Bigod, afterwards Earl of Norfolk.

<sup>3</sup> Harl. 4388.

<sup>4</sup> Bib. Reg. 13 A. 21. [Ed. T. Wright, 1850.]

Latin MSS. He mentions, among others, the Book of Wassingburch, a History of Winchester, and a translation from the Welsh, which was procured from the Earl of Gloucester by the kind offices of a Yorkshire Baron, named Walter Espec—in all probability Geoffrey of Monmouth's History. In 1153 *Wace* wrote the *Brut*;<sup>1</sup> in 1160 his *Roman de Rou*; and sometime after his *Chronicles of the Norman Dukes*. The King's glory was, he tells us, his only object; but the poet's zeal, or his patron's favour, seems at one time to have cooled, for we also learn, that Henry ordered *Benoit de Sainte More* to translate the History of the Norman Dukes. *Wace*, however, contrived to anticipate his rival; and *Benoit* followed him as Chronicler of Normandy<sup>2</sup> about the year 1172. *Benoit* also appears to have written a poem on the Trojan war.<sup>3</sup> *Michael [Martin] of Bury*, who, it has been elsewhere<sup>4</sup> conjectured, wrote one of the British Histories, and *Thomas of Kent*,<sup>5</sup> who assisted in compiling the *Roman d'Alexandre*, must be assigned to a somewhat later period.

At the beginning of the thirteenth century flourished *Stephen Langton*, Archbishop of Canterbury, to whom *La Rue* ascribes a *Canticle*<sup>6</sup> on our Saviour's Passion, written in staves of five verses with mixed rime. Soon afterwards *Denys Pyramus* wrote the *Life*<sup>7</sup> and also the "Miracles" of St. Edmund; and *Godfrey of Waterford* translated *Dares Phrygius*, thus giving us a second Anglo-Norman version of "The Tale of Troy Divine." About the middle of the century *Helis de Guincestre* wrote his version of "Cato;"<sup>8</sup> *Hue de Roteland*, his story of *Ippomydon*;<sup>9</sup> *Ohardri*, his *Lives of St. Josophat* and of the Seven Sleepers;<sup>10</sup> *Robert Bikes*, his *Lai du Corn*;<sup>11</sup> and *William de Wadington*, his "Manuel."<sup>12</sup> *Peter Langloft's Chronicle*

<sup>1</sup> Bib. Reg. 3 A. 21-3. and 4 C. 11.

<sup>2</sup> Harl. 4482.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 468.

<sup>4</sup> Dom. A. xi.

<sup>5</sup> Bennet MS. 405, 24.

<sup>6</sup> Cal. A. ix.

<sup>7</sup> Bib. Reg. 20 B. 14.

<sup>8</sup> Harl. 1717.

<sup>9</sup> Harl. 1605. See p. 469.

<sup>10</sup> Norf. MS. 392.

<sup>11</sup> Bibl. du Roi. 7656.

<sup>12</sup> Vespasian, A. vii.

<sup>13</sup> Digby MS. 86.

is of later date. It adds another to the long list of poems on that subject of untiring interest, the British History.

Two poets, connected with this country by their writings, have been omitted, as being natives of the Continent. *Guernes*, a monk of Picardy, came hither to collect facts for his Life of Becket, which he afterwards wrote,<sup>1</sup> and recited publicly at Canterbury; and *Marie* translated Alfred's fables,<sup>2</sup> and also certain Breton "lais."<sup>3</sup> She seems to have been patronised by William Longsword, Earl of Salisbury;<sup>4</sup> and was, probably, the daughter of some Norman (or, perhaps, of some Englishman, resident in Normandy), who came to England, when the French overrun the Duchy in the year 1204. I have also omitted the name of *Maurice Regan*, interpreter to Dermot, King of Leinster. He wrote a poem on the English conquest of Ireland, but was, probably, both by descent and birth an Irishman.<sup>5</sup>

Most of these authors wrote in verses of twelve or eight syllables, that is, in alexandrines or in the common rhythmus of four accents. There are, however, instances in which verses of five accents were made use of. Perhaps the earliest is an Ode upon the Crusades, found in the same MS. as Benoit's Chronicle of the Norman Dukes, and ascribed to that author by La Rue. It is written in the ballet-stave of seven,<sup>6</sup> and seems to be the earliest specimen in our Romance poetry not only of the verse of five accents, but also of the mixed rime.

In the far greater number of these poems the rime is continuous, running through a definite or indefinite number of verses, as the case may be; but Humfrey [Philippe] de Than, the first Norman writer of Alexandrine verse, rimes his *sections*—thus copying, in every particular, the Latin

<sup>1</sup> Harl. 270.

<sup>2</sup> Harl. 4333, and Vesp. B. xiv.

<sup>3</sup> Harl. 978.

<sup>4</sup> Son of Henry II. by Fair Rosamond.

<sup>5</sup> Robert Grosse-teste, John Hoveden, and a few others, not mentioned in the text, have had Romance poems ascribed to them; but I believe it will be found, on investigation, that they merely furnished the Latin originals, from which the Romance poems were translated.

<sup>6</sup> See p. 638.



rhythmus used by Elfric.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps we may infer, that this favourite Norman metre was only the copy of a rhythmus, at that time popular among our English Latinists.

I believe it will be found that the versification of these "rhythmi" was introduced into no modern language much before the year 1000. That it should be adopted in our Romance poetry before it made its appearance in English verse was to be expected. With the language of his ancestors, the Norman had also lost their versification, and the only cadences his ear had been taught to follow were those of the Latin rhythmi. But the writer of English poetry had a versification made to his hand—one familiar to the people, and admirably suited to the language. The intrusion, therefore, of a foreign rhythm was both unnecessary and unwelcome; and the result was a *mixture* of the two systems, which will hardly be considered an improvement on the earlier one.

In this short sketch of our Romance poetry, the *names* of the writers have generally been accommodated to the Norman dialect. This has been done, that we may not be thought unfairly to prejudice the question—are these writers French or English? Under other circumstances, such a disguise of the plain English names, Bennet Seymour, Robert Greathead, Hugh of Rutland, &c., would be every whit as miserable pedantry, as the use of the Latin synonymes, Benedictus de Sancto Mauro, Robertus Capito, &c., and only less absurd than the practice of certain critics, who carefully translate these names into modern French!

Of late years, French critics have distinguished between Norman and Anglo-Norman poems. M. Guizot, with very creditable patriotism, used the influence and resources at his command, in narrowly searching our libraries for *Norman* works, but I believe entirely without success. Every poem, as yet published under his sanction, is confessedly Anglo-Norman. Indeed most of these Romance poems

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<sup>1</sup> See p. 680.

leave little room for doubt or cavil. The MSS. are English; the circumstances of the writer, as far as they are disclosed, relate solely to this country; and the works themselves abound in English phrases, and allusions to English peculiarities of life and manners. Some of them show a marked dislike of all foreigners, not excepting the Norman; and in others we have an apology for defects of language, on the ground of its not being the native language of the writer. The authors were sometimes no doubt of Norman descent, but in several of these cases we can trace their families in the island, both before and for ages after these poems were written. Wace,<sup>1</sup> Seymour, and Gymer or Gimber, are names still to be met with in the streets of London.

An opinion, somewhat inconsistent with the one just controverted, has been advanced by La Rue, namely, that in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the Norman language was familiar to *all* classes in this country, and that England ran the greatest risk of losing her native language! Now, in the first place, our language during the period in question, though it had taken a form very different from the Anglo-Saxon, shows but little mixture of Romance, a fact difficult to explain, if the latter were familiar to the great bulk of the people; and, secondly, the Romance of England remained almost unchanged, while, on the continent, the same dialect was losing its final consonants, and gradually melting into the *patois*, which is at present spoken in Lower Normandy and Jersey. Must we not conclude, that in this country it was a dead language, learnt only from books, and therefore secure from those changes to which, as a living language, it was subject on the continent? We know that the schoolboy translated his Latin into Romance (as his successor turns Greek into Latin) in the vain hope of learning two languages by a process, which little promises to teach either. The Romance dialect, therefore, must have been more or less

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<sup>1</sup> Wace was a native of Jersey, the grandson of a Norman who fought at Hastings.

familiar to the scholar as well as to the courtier, but that it did not reach to the great body of the people, is clear from the many versions of Romance poems, made "for the lewed man," a phrase, be it observed, which includes both "lord" and yeoman. "Uplandish men," indeed, such as the franklin or the country gentleman, sometimes aped the accomplishment, much for the same reason that the *gentil-hommes* of the little German courts affect French—not that they admired the foreigner, his language, or his literature, but because it marked a *class*, and distinguished them from the burgher.

It is important, on several accounts, to ascertain how far and in what manner our native language has been affected, by admixture with this foreign dialect. Many mistakes have prevailed on the subject; and some of our critics have even confounded the Norman phrases of the twelfth century with the French<sup>1</sup> importations of the seventeenth. The latter, however, might be easily dispensed with, while the former have rooted themselves deeply in the language. There are some hundreds of words, which it would require the nicest skill in philology to say, whether they were originally Norman or Anglo-Saxon.<sup>2</sup>

The little attention that is paid to the critical study of our language, and the slight regard which attempts to investigate its history have met with, reflect no less dis-

<sup>1</sup> There are reasons for believing that "the French," which was brought into the country by Edward and his Norman favourites, was almost as much a foreign language at Paris as at London.

<sup>2</sup> For an example take the word *number*. If we were to ask whence did we get it? the triumphant answer would be, *from the Latin, through the French*. Now I have never met with the word in Anglo-Saxon, yet that it is native to our language may be shown almost to a certainty. There is an English law of composition, by reference to which we may resolve *number* into certain elements, which are found to have once existed in our language as *independent words*. There is one other language, widely differing in character from our own, in which, however, the same law prevails, and a like analysis may be effected. Will the French enable us to resolve *nombre*? or the Latin to resolve *numerus*!

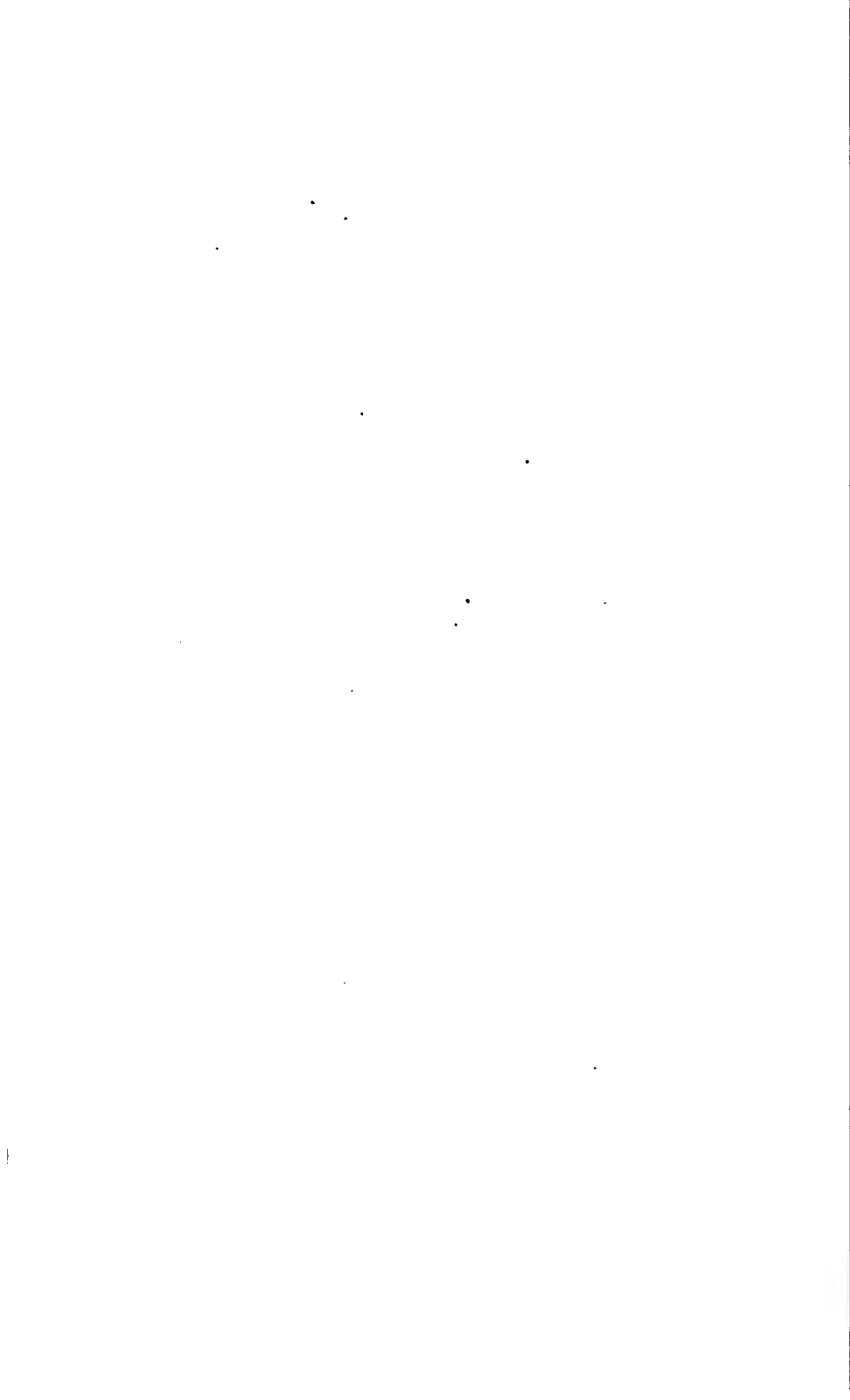
The word was, in all probability, used both in Anglo-Saxon and in Norman Romance. [But see note in the Appendix.]

credit on our patriotism than on our scholarship. While Frenchmen are sending agents over Europe to scrutinize every manuscript, which may shed light on their early literature, Englishmen are satisfied<sup>1</sup> with knowing, that Anglo-Saxon MSS. may be found in France, in Holland, and in Sweden. The German publishes the most insignificant fragment connected with the antiquities of his language, while *our* manuscripts lie mouldering in our libraries, and our critics—some of them of no mean reputation—content themselves with the vague and scanty notices of a Hickes and a Wanley. Yet the early literature, which is thus neglected, may be traced to the fifth century, and far surpasses the contemporary literature of every other nation in works of interest and of genius. In the first rank of those gifted men who have shed glory on our country, by the side of Shakespeare, of Milton, and of Spenser, we may place the two patriarchs of English song—Cædmon and Chaucer.

If, instead of looking to the past, we speculate on the future, our language will hardly sink in our estimate of its importance. Before another century has gone by, it will, at the present rate of increase, be spoken by hundreds of millions! Of the five great temperate regions, *three*—North America, South Africa, and Australia—are fast peopling with our race; and some, now living, will see them overspread with a population, claiming in our language the same interest as ourselves. That language, too, is rapidly becoming the great medium of civilisation, the language of law and literature to the Hindoo, of commerce to the African, of religion to the scattered islanders of the Pacific. The range of its influence, even at the present day, is greater than ever was that of the Greek, the Latin, or the Arabic; and the circle widens yearly. Though it were not our mother tongue, it would still, of all living languages, be the one most worthy of our study and our cultivation, as bearing most directly on the happiness of mankind.

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<sup>1</sup> There is *one* exception to this remark in the publication of the Paris Psalter by the University of Oxford. See p. 563, n. 1, [and p. 302, n. 1.]



## NOTES.

[Of the following notes, some are by the author himself, and are marked E. G. Others are by the editor, and are marked W. W. S. Others, again, are from a copy containing MS. annotations by Mr. Swifte, and are marked E. L. S. See the Preface.]

P. 11, l. 14. On the subject of English sounds, the reader should consult Mr. Sweet's Handbook of Phonetics, especially his table of consonants at p. 112, where the symbol *q* is used to denote the sound of *ng*. Comparing Dr. Guest's results with this table, we may observe that Mr. Sweet includes the letter *j*, which Dr. Guest does not mention. From pages 6-10 of the present volume, we gather that the "twenty-two" sounds include "thirteen that are vocal," viz. *b, d, g, v, dh, z, zh, w* (see p. 9), *m, n, g, l, r* (see pp. 7 and 8); and "nine mere whisper sounds," viz. *p, t, k, f, th, s, sh, wh, h* (p. 9).

The statement that "the vowels are eleven in number" causes some difficulty. I do not feel quite sure as to the sound intended by *u* in *put*. If it rime with *but*, then there is no mention of the sound of *oo* in *foot*; and if it rime with *foot*, then there is no mention of *u* in *but*. It is clear that, on either hypothesis, one of the sounds has been left out which should be included. Again, there is a difficulty in the statement that "the diphthongs are twelve"; we must, in any case, read "fourteen," because we have actual mention of *ei, oi, ou*, and *eleven* others. But, in fact, there are two more, viz. the sound of *ai* in *hair*, and the peculiar sound of *ir* in *bird* in Southern English, the *r* not being trilled. See Sweet's Handbook of Phonetics, p. 110.

But at p. 107, Dr. Guest gives a list of "Short Vowels," and "Long Vowels." Here not only the *u* in *pull* is mentioned, but (on p. 108) there is also mention of the *u* in *hut*. And further, at p. 108, note 1, we find that the sound of *ir* in *bird* (or, what is the same thing, that of *ur* in *burn*) is distinctly recognized, and its right value assigned as being merely the long sound of *u* in *bun*. This is clearly marked by Mr. Sweet, who uses the notation [bɛn] to represent *bun*, and [bœn] to represent *burn*.

We hence draw the conclusion, that the author has himself seen that his first statement, on p. 11, was erroneous, and has, in fact, increased the number of vowels to *thirteen*. To use his own examples, these vowels occur in the words *fathom, merry, pill, Poll, pull, father, Mary, peel, pall, pool, note, bun, burn*. There is still one difficulty left, viz. that the example *Mary* has here been substituted for *ate* at p. 11. But the sounds are really different; the *a* in *Mary* is the same as the *ai* in *hair*, and is to be considered as a diphthong.

The corrected statements may, finally, be thus expressed. There are, in English, *thirteen* vowels, occurring in the words *pat, pet, pit, pot, bull, but,*

*father, fate, peel, pall, pool, note, bird.* There are also *four* diphthongs formed without the use of *y*, viz. the sounds in *bite, boy, out, hair.* If we include such as made by prefixing *y*, we must add to these, not "eleven others formed by prefixing *y* to the eleven vowels," but *thirteen* others formed by prefixing *y* to the thirteen vowels. Examples may be seen in the words *yap, yell, yif, yon, young* (as pronounced in the North of England, but unknown to our ordinary Southern speech), *young* (as pronounced in London), *yard, Yates, yeas, yeal, yule, yoke, yearn.* I have here substituted *Yates* for *yare*, because the sound following *y* in this word is, properly, a diphthong. We might, theoretically, prefix *y* to the other diphthongs, producing the combinations *yi, yoi, yow*, but such combinations do not practically occur, except in the peculiar cry *Yoicks!* and in the provincial English *yowl.* Even thus we do not quite exhaust the list, for the words *yore, year, your*, present sounds hardly included in any of the foregoing.

It will be seen that the subject of the pronunciation of our English vowels and diphthongs is one of considerable difficulty.—W. W. S.

P. 13, l. 15. Read this line as Walker and his school would read it—"Melojus murmurs"—its *melody* is altogether lost, though the precise number of syllables is preserved. *Open* it—"melo-di-ous,"—and though we sound eleven syllables instead of ten, the imitative melody is preserved.—E. L. S.

P. 22, note 1. Etymology tells us that the word *syllable*, borrowed from Greek through the media of Latin and French, is derived from the prep. *σύν* and the verb *λαμβάνειν*. The Welsh *silleb*, a syllable, is merely borrowed from English, and also appears as *sillaf* and *sill*. The derivation of this *silleb* from *eb*, an utterance, and *sill*, an element, is one of the numerous extraordinary assertions that are to be found in Pugh's Welsh Dictionary, but have no foundation in fact.—W. W. S.

P. 31, l. 14; and note 1. On the other hand, the form *Eloy* certainly *does* occur in English verse, viz. in Lyndsay's Monarché, b. ii., l. 2299.

Sanct *Eloy* he doith staitly stand,  
Ane new hors schoo in-tyll his hand.

Here the initial *e* is not elided, as suggested; but, on the contrary, is accented. So again in Lyndsay's Monarché, b. ii., l. 2367.

Sum makis offrande to sanct *Eloye*,  
That he thare hors may weill connoye.

Brand, in his Antiquities, quotes from a book called the World of Wonders, where there is mention of "St. *Eloy*, who is the saint for smithes." *Eloy* is the invariable O. French spelling of Eligius, whose life is given in Butler's Lives of the Saints, under December 1. He was a goldsmith, and master of the Mint to Clotaire II., Dagobert I., and Clovis II. He was also Bishop of Noyon. Sir H. Nicolas, in his Calendar of Saints' Days, mentions "Eligius, bishop and confessor, Dec. 1," and "Eloy, a Scotaman, bishop of Voion in France, Dec. 1." He seems unaware that these two names represent the *same* person. He was not a Scotsman or *Gael*, but a *Gaul*; and he was bishop of Noyon, not of Voion. He became the patron saint of goldsmiths, farriers, smiths, and carters. When, in Chaucer's Friar's Tale, the carter says,

"I pray God saue thy body, and *seint Loy*,"

it is clear that *Loy* is here short for *Eloy*, that is, Eligius. And the name was

certainly frequently so shortened, as in the example from Churchyard in the note to p. 31. The *Catholicon Anglicum* (A.D. 1483) actually gives: "*Loye*, elegius (*sic*), nomen proprium." Sir T. More, ed. 1577, p. 194, says: "*St. Loy* we make an horseleche," &c.

"And *Loye* the smith doth looke to horse, and smithes of all degree,  
If they with iron meddle here, or if they goldesmithes bee."

*Barnaby Googe* (as cited in Brand).

There is a half-ruined chapel near Exeter called *St. Loyes*; and Dr. Oliver, in his *Ecclesiastical Antiquities* in Devon, calls it *St. Eligius' Chapel* or *St. Eloy's Chapel* (*The Academy*, June 5, 1880, p. 422). There is a district called *St. Loyes* in Bedford. There was a *St. Loy's house* in Wedon-Pinckney, Northamptonshire, mentioned in *Bridges' Hist. of that county* (Brand).

Hence, without giving any opinion on the scansion of the line of Chaucer here cited, I am still inclined to suppose that *Loy* means *Eligius* in this passage as well as in the *Friar's Tale*. Mr. Furnivall's theory is, that it means "the holy law," the prioress being too dainty to swear by any saint at all. This question was discussed in *The Academy*, May 29, June 5, 12, and 19, 1880. I remain of the same opinion still.—W. W. S.

P. 33, l. 27. It can hardly be conceded that *de* is "the old and proper termination of the perfect;" for the fuller form *-ode*, as in *luf-ode*, is sufficiently common, and the Gothic has *-ida*, *-aida*, *-oda*, as in *lag-ida*, I laid, *hab-aida*, I had, *spill-oda*, I told. This suffix *-ode* became *-ede*, and also appears shortened to *-de*, *-te*, or occasionally *-ed*, according to the form of the preceding stem. See, on this subject, Chaucer's *Prioresses Tale*, ed. Skeat, 2nd edit., Introduction, p. li.—W. W. S.

P. 35. Another example of *quaint* for *acquaint* occurs in the following:

Than went this Ottobone thorghout the cuntre,  
And *quaynted* him with ilkone, lewed and ordine.

*Rob. of Brunne, tr. of Langtoft*, p. 225.—E. G.

P. 37, l. 18. But in the edition of Ben Jonson's Works, published by Routledge in 1860, the line stands thus:

To *strangle* headstrong husbands, rob the easy.—W. W. S.

P. 39, l. 11. With *'cide* for *decide*, compare *'liver* for *deliver*. "Most *'liver* lads of Lancashire."—*Flodden Field*, 1337, 1363. "And letters *'livered* to the king."—*Ib.* 1444.—E. G.

P. 40, l. 2. This is somewhat obscure, but probably implies that *w* occurs in A. S. between two vowels, as in *fewer*, four. It cannot be meant that the *w* in *fewer* stands for *g*, as we know that it does not.—W. W. S.

P. 42. So also *queate* for *quiet*.

To whom Cordella did succeed, not rainging long in *queate*.

*Warner, Albion's England*, ch. 14.—E. G.

P. 45. Compare—

With all | the gris|ly le|gions | that troop  
Under the sooty flag of Acheron. *Comus*, 603.—E. G.

P. 46, last line. Observe, that in l. 2 of the quotation on p. 47, Spenser has *blooom*. This renders it very probable that by *bloem* or *blooom* he really intended the word *bloom*, which he (or his printer) misspelt from confusion with



*blossom*. Perhaps he thought *bloom* was short for *blossom*. As a fact, the Icel. *blómi* and A. S. *blótma* are distinct yet allied forms, from the same root.—W. W. S.

P. 50. Compare *fel'ny* for *felony*.

An erle than wes ner hym by  
That slwe a man in hys *felny*.

*Wyntoun*, vi. 13, 90.

See this quotation in Jamieson, s.v. *Felny*.—E. G.

[N.B.—In scanning these lines, trill the *r* in *erle*; it is practically dissyllabic—*er'l*.—W. W. S.]

P. 51, last line. It is difficult to see what is meant. If the *i* in *haring* be elided, the word becomes *hav'ng*, which is unpronounceable. The truth is, rather, that *having* is so rapidly pronounced that the two syllables are made to occupy no more than the time of one. This is a principle which the author does not at first admit, and in opposing it strains many examples so as to force the pronunciation into very difficult forms. It is necessary to draw attention to this, because it appears to me that, as the work advances, the suggestion here made is practically given up. As this is an important point, see the note to p. 176.—W. W. S.

P. 53, l. 15. With *probal*, compare *hospital*, used for *hospitable*; Fuller, Church Hist. bk. v. p. 197.—E. G.

P. 53, l. 27. The reference is obviously to Barbour's Bruce, which commences with the lines:—

Storys to rede ar *delitabill*,

Suppos that thai be nocht bot *fabill*.—W. W. S. (See p. 190.)

P. 56, l. 9; p. 61, l. 9. See many examples in Ritson's note to Two Gent. of Verona, Boswell's ed. p. 137.—E. G.

P. 63, l. 3. To the treatment of *horrible* as a dissyllable, objection may be taken; see note to p. 51 above.—W. W. S. Rather is it trisyllabic.—E. L. S.

P. 63, l. 9. Compare the Rouchi *resonape*, *abominape*, for French *raisonnable*, *abominable*.—E. G.

P. 69, l. 14. The scansion of this line is very uncertain; see it discussed in Chaucer's Prioresses Tale, &c., ed. Skeat, note to Group F, l. 20.—W. W. S.

P. 71. Compare—

From Greenwich to these sands, some scurvy-grass do bring,  
That inwardly *apply'd* 's a wondrous sovereign thing.

*Drayton, Polyolbion*, s. 18 (*near the end*).—E. G.

P. 76, l. 18. The rule here given, defining the syllables on which the secondary accent may fall is, I have no doubt, a correct one. But it is difficult to say under what circumstances the Anglo-Saxon poet availed himself of the privilege. I incline to think, that when a word, accented on the last syllable but two, closed an alliterative couplet, no secondary accent was made use of, unless wanted to make up the two accents, without which no English sentence can subsist. When such a word closed the *first* section, and the two necessary accents were provided for, I think there was no secondary accent, except in cases where the second section began with an unaccented syllable. These two rules have been deduced chiefly from an examination of Caedmon's rhymer. They are laid down with some degree of diffidence, but they seem to agree

well with the general character of Anglo-Saxon rhythm, that I have not hesitated to correct, in the Errata [to the former edition] the scansion of any verse, in which they have not been observed.—E. G.

P. 77. The verses here quoted are from Sir Philip Sydney; see p. 151.—W. W. S.

P. 78, l. 11. The same rhythm is found in the Netherlandish poetry of the same date; see De Const van Rethoriken, by Matthys (?) de Casteleyn, A.D. 1550, quoted by Mone, *Alt Niederl. Volks Litt.* p. 31.—E. G.

P. 93, l. 20. Rather scan the line thus—

Of wo|decraft | wel coud|' he al | th' usag|e.

That is, read *wodecraft* (trisyllabic), and *wel coude he*, not *he coude wel*. As to *wode* being dissyllabic, the author has already stated it to be so on p. 28.—W. W. S.

P. 94, l. 12. The statement that Chaucer makes *-acle* but one syllable seems to be an oversight; for *obstacles*, *miracles* (both trisyllabic) are quoted just above. So also *miracle*, *tridole* (*Man of Law's Tale*, 477); *cardiacle*, *tridole* (*Pardoner's Tale*, Group C, 313). An unmistakable example is in the *Man of Law's Tale*, 636—

For but | if Christ | o|pen mira|cle kyth|e.—W. W. S.

P. 99, l. 23. By *uncut*, is meant the prov. E. word more usually written *unked*; yet, strictly speaking, *unked* answers rather to M. E. *unkid*, pp. of the causal verb *kithen*, itself a derivative from *couth*. But we may, without objection, instance the pronunciation of *uncouth* which survives in the Lowl. Scot. *unco'*, as having its accent on the first syllable.—W. W. S.

P. 99, l. 28. There are two prefixes spelt *mis-*. In *mis-chance*, *mis-* is from O. F. *mes*, Lat. *minus*, orig. an adverb. In *mis-deed*, *mis-* is a Teutonic prefix, also of adverbial origin. In neither case is it a preposition.—W. W. S.

P. 105, l. 30. As to the pronunciation of the final *e* in Chaucer, see Ellis, *Early English Pronunciation*, Chap. IV., and the introductions to the Selections from Chaucer in the Clarendon Press Series.—W. W. S.

P. 111, l. 25. It is strange that a poet with Gray's sensitive ear could have been unobservant of the ungraceful jingle of "*Mæanders amber*." The elisions in "*Ling'ring lab'rinth*" spoil the representative rhythm which Gray's instinctive sense of harmony had surely intended. Read the line with a slight opening of the middle syllables, "*In lingering labyrinth creep*," and note the effect. The admissibility and the beauty of a *semi-elision* depend on its position in the line.—E. L. S.

P. 119, l. 1. But the *printers* of Spenser's *Fairy Queen* certainly altered the spelling in some instances in order to produce a rime to the eye as well as to the ear. There can be no doubt of this; and one example may suffice. In Bk. i. c. 8, st. 10, the verb to *quite* is spelt *quight*, merely because it rimes with *light*, *bright*, and *might*. What Spenser himself did, was to alter, not the spelling, but the form or pronunciation of the word, in order to get a rime. Of this also there is no doubt; for he uses *cherry* instead of *cherish* merely to secure a rime to *merry*, bk. vi. c. 10, st. 22. Considering the great length of the *Fairy Queen*, it is a marvel that the faulty rimes are so few. That the *general* execution of the work is of marvellous excellence, no one will be disposed to deny.—W. W. S.

P. 131. Compare also :—

Ripe are their *ruffs*, their *cuffs*, their beards, their gait.

*Ben Jonson, Epigram 92, l. 6.*—E. G.

P. 134. Compare also :—

And in al thing, full suth to say,

Is nought *neidful*, na *speidful* ay.

*Wyntoun, 9, 20, 46.*—E. G.

P. 137, l. 3 from bottom. The former edition has "*Hättalykia*," which I have corrected to "*Hättalykill*."—W. W. S.

P. 139, l. 3 from bottom. It may be doubted whether the vowels in *raigning* and *raging* corresponded in the 16th century.—W. W. S.

P. 142. Compare also :—

The Dean was small—his soul was large,

He knew his duty to discharge.

He loved | his chap|ter, treat|ed all |

His dig|nita|ries, vic|ars chor|al

From Tall | boy down | to lit|tle Wor|rall.

*Dean Percival: A Description in Answer to the Journal (Swift's);* in W. Scott, *Life of Swift*, p. 271.—E. G.

P. 142, l. 15. Dryden, and this in his earlier time, was I think the latest of our poets who used this rime.

No comet need foretell his change drew on,

Whose corpse might seem a *constellation*.

*Death of Lord Hastings, 65.*—E. L. S.

Dryden also rimes *alone* with *fruition*; see his Panegyric on the Coronation, l. 69.—W. W. S.

P. 145. According to Bohn's Lowndes, the first edition of Creech's translation appeared in 1684. In that edition, the peculiar rime here noted is not to be found.—W. W. S.

P. 160, l. 4. Consult the Table of Rhythms at the end of the Preface.

P. 163. The lines beginning "*My former hopes*," &c., are from Cowper's Olney Hymns. The lines beginning "*My soul is beset*" are by the Rev. J. Newton; also from the Olney Hymns, as printed in Newton's Works, iii. 580. 3rd ed. 1824. For "*mercy*" read "*pity*."—W. W. S.

P. 165. Additional examples are these.

The wakened laverock warbling springs,

And climbs the early sky,

Win|nowing blithe | her dewy wings

In morning's rosy eye. *Burns, To Mr. Cunningham.*

Dick heard, and tweedling, ogling, bridling,

Turn|ing sharp round|, strutt|ing and sid|ling.

*Cowper, Pairing Time Anticipated.*

And we | did speak | on|ly to break

The silence of the sea.

*Coleridge. Anc. Mariner, pt. 2.*

The swift | swal|ow pursu'th | the fly|es smale|.

*Surrey, Desc. of Spring.*

Anon | out | of the earth | a fab | ric huge |  
Rose like an exhalation. *Milton, P. L. 1, 710.*

Whoe | ver saw | a colt | wan | ton and wild |  
Yok'd with a slow-foot ox on fallow field, &c.  
*Hall, Satires, Book 1, Sat. 6.—E. G.*

P. 167. Compare also :—

Abominable, unutterable, and worse. *Milton, P. L. 2, 626.*

Exile, or ignominy, or bonds, or pain. *Id. 2, 207.*

And saw an hand—armles, that wroot ful faste.  
*Chaucer, Monkes Tale, Balihazor.*

Preach some philosophy to make me mad,  
And thou shalt be : canonized, Cardinal. *K. John, 3, 4, 51.*

Burn | ing for blood, | bo | ny and gaunt | and grim |.  
*Thomson's Seasons, Winter, 394.—E. G.*

P. 172, first line. There are *two* versions of the Pricke of Conscience. That by Hampole is in octosyllabic metre. The other version, by an anonymous author, is in heroic verse; but I do not know that it can be proved to be older than Chaucer's poems in the same metre. Chaucer's metre, it may be here observed, is much more *regular* than has been commonly supposed.—W. W. S.

P. 175, l. 20. In the two first of these instances, *om'nous, pill'r*, the elision is difficult and offensive.—E. L. S. I suspect that what is here called "the fashionable opinion" is, after all, the true one. I am here quite on Thelwall's side. See the next note.—W. W. S.

P. 176, l. 17. On the contrary, I think that the pettiness of the delinquency *may* be pleaded. It does not *at all* follow that, if a short syllable may be obtruded, so may also a long one. It is just *because* it is short that it may find place; and I do not see how to reconcile the doctrine here laid down with other passages. The examples on p. 167 from P. L. 4. 138, 2. 861, 2. 1021 seem conclusive; for in the phrases *lof | tiest shade*, *perpe | tual ag | ony*, *with dif | fi | cul | ty* and *la | bour*, we have feet which contain three syllables. It cannot be right to say *loft-yesst*, *perpet-wal*, *difficult and labour*. Again, on p. 166, we have *sor | row and pain* and *tem | ples and tow'rs*, clear examples of trisyllabic feet. It is, perhaps, proper to point out that, in the former edition, the line from P. R. 3, 267 was quoted in the form—

For | est and field | and flood : | tem | ple and tow'er (*sic*) |

and it is probable that the author supposed the final *e* in *temple* to be elided. But as the true reading is *temples and towers*, such elision becomes impossible, and the theory fails. I believe the author afterwards conceded this point, for examples of trisyllabic feet abound in the later part of the book. Thus, to take a page almost at random, on p. 217 we find *is as fair* in *one foot*; and, in the very next example, *where | fore do I*; and yet again, just below, *frail | ty, thy name*. The true rule concerning trisyllabic feet is simply this, that the intrusive syllable should be as short and light as possible. A good example is given by Pope's favourite line, quoted on p. 111.

The free | zing Tan | ais through | a waste | of snows |.

Here the intrusive syllable is the second *a* in *Tana-is*, and is very light and short, as it should be. It adds a great beauty to the verse, as may easily be perceived by reading *Tannis* instead of it, and comparing the results. It is rather to be admired than condemned; and as Dr. Guest well puts it, "the voice lingers with the river" (p. 112).—W. W. S.

P. 176, note 1. The etymology of *heir* from Lat. *heredem*, acc. of *heres*, is quite right. The spelling with *h* is far older than the 16th century. It occurs in the Ellesmere MS. of Chaucer, Group B, l. 766, where the Cambridge MS. has *eyr*; and it occurs as *heir* in Anglo-French in the Statutes of the Realm, p. 48, A.D. 1278. The Dutch *oir* is merely borrowed from the Old French *hoir*, another form of *heir*. As regards the latter part of the note, we know that both *suit* and *suits* are of French origin. What is meant by the statement that the word has formed "part of our vulgar tongue since the days of Alfred," I cannot conjecture.—W. W. S.

P. 180, l. 1. The first four lines are imitated in the Gulliverian ode [by Swift, Works, ed. Scott, xiii. 365], beginning

In amaze  
Lost I gaze,

playfully supposing that short men must write in short metre, whilst the Brobdingnag poet uses ultra-Alexandrine.—E. L. S.

P. 182. The poem by Cowper will be found among his Olney Hymns.

P. 189. [Some examples have been omitted here which appeared in the first edition, because in a note at the end of vol. 1 of that edition they are said to be wrongly scanned. In the same note occur the following remarks.—W. W. S.]

In Beowulf, l. 3637, is found the passage—

wæron her tela  
Willum bewenede : thu us wel dohtest

and in the translation, just published by Mr. Kemble, is the following note, "The alliteration is upon *thu*, and Thorpe therefore suggests *bethenede*." The proposed amendment is an ingenious one, but still I think it was somewhat hastily adopted in the translation, for the *chief* alliterative syllable in the last verse is certainly *wel* not *thu*,

Wil|lum bewen|ede : thu | us wel | dohtest

In the preface (which exhibits much curious research and speculation, though I cannot agree in its conclusions) certain proper names are reduced, by a variety of hypothesis, to the following series ;

Woden.	Beowa.	Baldag.
Bed-Wiga.	Tætwa.	Brand.
Hwala.	Geata.	Freotho-gar.
Hadra.	God-wulf.	Freothowine.
Iter-Mon.	Finn.	Wig.
Here-Mod.	Freawine.	Gewis.
Sceafa.	Freothola.	Kala.
Sceldwa.	Freothowalda.	Elem.

"And here we have the remarkable and pleasing fact, that of all the twenty-four names, two only (Beowa and Tætwa) do not stand in alliteration with one

another, from which we may reasonably assume, that in times older than even these most ancient traditions, another and equivalent adjective stood in the place of *Tatwa*." I have quoted this statement, respecting the alliteration, which, it will be seen, is made the ground-work of an important inference, in order to point out two oversights, that seem to have escaped the author. There is certainly no alliteration between *Wo|den* and *Bed|-Wiga*, nor between *I|ter-Mon* and *He|re-Mod*. In the last case, indeed, secondary accents may fall on the syllables *Mon* and *Mod*, but such accents cannot support an alliteration.—E. G.

P. 200, l. 23. The word *færcyle* can only be marked as *fær|cyl|e*. We cannot lay stress upon the *e*. Hence it is not an example of 5 *l*: 5.—W. W. S.

P. 212, l. 9. Another example is in the following :

Give the like notice

To | Valen|tius : Row|land and Crass|us.

*Mirror for Magistrates*, 5, 1 (Collier's edition).—E. G.

P. 222. An example has been omitted on this page, as the scansion of it was said to be incorrect in a note to the former edition.—W. W. S.

P. 240, last line but one. I should read *senators* as a trisyllable.—W. W. S.

P. 270, l. 20. The elision of the final *e* is occasionally a matter of much doubt. Ormin elided it, both before a vowel, and also before the *h*. In Anglo-Saxon verse, it was sometimes elided, sometimes not ; but whether the elision were regulated by rule, or left to the caprice or convenience of the poet, I cannot say. When quoting the verse in p. 159, l. 35, it escaped my recollection, that this verse had already been scanned by Conybeare, and (as he elides one of the *e*'s) scanned differently from what appears in the text. The reasoning, however, is but slightly affected by this oversight.

In many compound sections, besides the regular alliteration, which binds together the *couplet*, there is a kind of subordinate alliteration, which is confined to the section, and may therefore be called the sectional. In the following examples, the syllables, which contain the sectional alliteration, are written in italics.

Heard|es hel|le wit|es : thæs | the he *wann* | with heof|nes *wal*|dend

See p. 270.

Migt|ig on mod|e yr|re : wearp | hine *on* | thæt mor|ther-*is*|nan Ib.

Worh|te man | him hit | to wit|e : *hȳr*|a wor|uld was | ge*hwyr*|fed

p. 274.

Hearn | on this|se hel|le : *wa*|la ah|te ic . min|ra ha*nd*|a ge*weald*|

p. 336.

Ne | gelyf|e ic | me nu| . thæs leoh|tes fur|thor : *thæs* | the him *thenc*|eth  
lang|e not|an. p. 338.

Forswap|en on | thas sweart|an mis|tas : swa | he *us* | ne mæg *æn*|ige syn|ne  
gestel|an. Ib.

Swa mig|tigne on | his mod|gethoh|te : *he* | let *hin*|e swa mic|les weal|dan.

p.

This sectional alliteration is worthy of notice on two accounts. First, it

strengthens the hypothesis, advanced in p. 261, as to the origin of the compound section; for, in most cases, the alliterative syllables are so distributed, as to give the compound section all the properties of an alliterative couplet. And, secondly, it countenances the opinion thrown out in p. 562, that the solitary section, sometimes met with in Icelandic poetry, is merely the concluding portion of a compound section. If we suppose the sectional alliteration *b* to fall in the latter part of a compound section, and the regular alliteration *a* in the first part, we might divide the whole couplet, so as to get an alliterative couplet and supernumerary section—the alliterative syllables being thus distributed;

a a : a  
b b

The student may sometimes be led, owing to the sectional alliteration, to consider a compound section as a regular alliterative couplet. Perhaps the verses in pp. 348 and 356 might have been better scanned, as follows,

He | wæs Thra|cia-thiod|a al|dor : and Re|tie-ric|es hird|e  
Thæt mod | mon|na sæn|iges : eal|lunga to | him sæf|re mæg | ouwen|dan

The first of these couplets is bound together by a very weak alliteration (*he* and *hirde*); but still I think such a scansion of the verse preferable to the one given in the text, inasmuch as the latter makes the middle pause fall in the midst of the compounds *Thracia-thioda* and *Retie-rices*—a mode of division, which I believe is unexampled in Anglo-Saxon poetry.—E. G.

P. 283, l. 7 from bottom. Compare the following :

A broad | bream | : to please some curious taste.

This line is cited, from Waller, in Todd's Johnson, s.v. *Bream*.—E. G.

I give this note as exemplifying the uncertainty attaching to quotations at second hand. I have found the line, after some search, in Waller's *Battle of Somer Islands*, c. 3; and it turns out that the rhythm of the line is quite different, the word *As* being omitted from the beginning. The line really runs thus :

As | a broad bream | : to please | some cu|rious taste|.—W. W. S.

P. 310, footnote, l. 2. Further examples are these :

"In Saynte *Sydwylle* is Paroche, ther as *she* was byhedded, ys a well," &c. Chartulary of St. John's Hospital, Exeter; quoted in *Archæological Journal*, No. 60, vol. xv. p. 316.

"The bages (badges) that he (Duke of York, father of Edw. IV.) beareth . . . ys the fawcon with a *mayden* ys hedde and hur here hangyng above hure shuldris with a crowne aboute hir nekke."—Digby MSS. No. 82, quoted in *Archæological Journal*, No. 17, p. 226.—E. G. [The latter reference is wrong.]

So also in the following :

And the *sonc-is* name, Bertram debonaire.

*Romans of Partenay*, 28.

In the same poem, l. 5750, the genitive of *Tristram* is written *Tristram-is*. afterwards altered, in l. 6008, to *Tristram hys*. See, on this point, the note to Specimens of English, Part II., ed. Morris and Skeat, sect. 18, l. 96.—W. W. S.

P. 336, note 1. Bosworth gives *rúmic*, *romigan*, with the explanation

"cedere, evacuari;" the references are not easily to be verified. But the *rómi-gan* as used by Caedmon is quite a different word, occurring nowhere else in A. S. It appears to be allied to O. Saxon *rómian*, also a difficult word. The probable sense in this passage is "possess," an equivalent to *agan* in the preceding line.—W. W. S.

P. 358, note 5. *Glaive* has no connection with A. S. *láf*.—W. W. S.

P. 370, l. 19. The statement that "many of the letters are illegible" is due to Thorpe, who gives a copy of this poem in his *Analecta*, p. 153, which is quite correct as far as is here quoted. He then quotes three more lines (divided by him into six) with a note that "the last six lines are in a different and almost illegible hand." He then gives six asterisks, which I, in reading him, supposed to mean that the rest is illegible. But on examining the MS., I find that the poem breaks off altogether, and there is no more of it. The last lines are certainly in a different and later hand, but are not illegible; and as I read one word differently, I here give them. The poem is continued thus:

For some bið pin hæfet . Faxes bireued .  
al bið ðes faxes . feirnes foraceden .  
næle hit nan mit fingres . feire stracien .

For soon will thy head be bereaved of its hair,  
Wholly will the fairness of the hair be shed [spoilt],  
No one with their fingers will fairly stroke it.

The word misread by Thorpe is *feire*, for which he prints *feing*, destroying the sense.—W. W. S.

P. 378, note 2. If we refer to p. 384, note 4, we see that there is no reason why we should not take *With-myrgingum* as the name of a people, the "With-myrgings," or dwellers near the Myrgings. The *Myrgings*, or rather *Myrcings*, are "the dwellers near the *mark*" or boundary, and the *With-myrgings* are "the dwellers on the other side of or beyond that boundary." We might then translate "for the With-myrgings." But of course the whole passage is very obscure. (In l. 4 on this page, the word is misprinted *myrgingum*. This is a misprint in the former edition which I failed to notice till too late).—W. W. S.

P. 380, note 6. The *n* in *Gundaharius* is by no means intrusive. The A. S. *gǽð*, battle, has a long *u*, precisely because it stands for *gunth*, and is cognate with M. H. German *gund*, battle, whence M. H. G. *gundfano*, battle-standard, and (through the French) Eng. *gonfanon* or *gonfalon*.—W. W. S.

P. 398, l. 19. Cowper's "trifling" will be found in his letter to the Rev. John Newton, July 12, 1781, beginning—"My very dear friend—I am going to send—what, when you have read—you may scratch your head—and, say, I suppose—there's nobody knows—whether what I have got—be verse or not."—W. W. S.

P. 405, l. 13. See the "Grammatical Analysis" of Layamon's language prefixed to Madden's edition. He notes "that sometimes, but rarely, the nom. takes *-en*;" but it seems to be quite exceptional. He also notes that "occasionally the definite form [of the adjective] has the final *-n*, as *thas athelen*, *thare athelen*, and *pene alden*."—W. W. S.

P. 406, note 3. *Ernley* means Lower Arley or Arley Regis, 3½ miles south-east of Bewdley, in Worcestershire; see p. 683.—W. W. S.

P. 407, note 7. I do not take *sæ* to be the genitive. *Sæ-stronde* is a compound word, like Mod. E. *seaside*.—W. W. S.



P. 410, l. 14. Surely *dole* should be marked *dol|e*. The whole stress of the verse comes on the former syllable of this word.—W. W. S.

P. 416, l. 3 from bottom. This strong accentuation of the prefix *un-* is very forced. No doubt it had a strong accent at first, but it is probable that by this time it had lost much of its original force, and the analogy of the other lines suggest the scansion: Child | unthe | and : thral | unbux | sum. Every one now says *unbuxom*, not *unbuxom*, and such an accent must be very old.

P. 416, last line. It is clear to me that *wo* was accented. The accent is not marked, because the theory is, that two accented syllables cannot come together; which I do not admit. Indeed, Dr. Guest has examples of accents in close contiguity, at p. 281, ll. 3, 9, 15, 20, 25, &c. I therefore scan the line thus:—

Al|so sei|de Bed|e : wo | ther|e theod|e.—W. W. S.

P. 418, l. 8. I should mark the scansion thus: that to | my song|e lith|e.—W. W. S.

P. 418, l. 15. I should also put an accent on *so*.—W. W. S.

P. 420, l. 11. I should also put an accent on *horn*. So also in l. 13.—W. W. S.

P. 420, l. 23. I should also accent *lai*.—W. W. S.

P. 428, l. 25. I should rather scan it thus: That he | for the | : &c.—W. W. S.

P. 432, l. 13. Here *five* accents are marked. As in the other lines, there are only four. Scan it thus:—

Hi lou|ed' hur' al|le : with her|e mi|zte.—W. W. S.

P. 436, l. 23. I should scan it thus:—

Dene|mark : and | that ther|til long|es.—W. W. S.

P. 460, l. 4. I should accent *herde* (written for *herd*), and perhaps also *sep*.—W. W. S.

P. 465. [Examples of alliteration occur in modern poetry, as in the following.]

Broad and brown below

Extensive harvests hang the heavy head.

Thomson, *Autumn*, 30.

So he in his bed

Turns his sides and his shoulders and his heavy head.

Dr. Watts, *The Suggard*, st. 1.—E. G.

A large number of similar examples might be quoted. Thus Shakespeare has—

Full fathom five thy father lies—

Though thou the waters warp,

and the like. Gray writes—

Ruin seize thee, ruthless king;—

Weave the warp, and weave the woof,

The winding-sheet of Edward's race.

And Pope writes:—

Puffs, powders, patches, bibles, billet-doux.

*Rape of the Lock*, i. 138.

But the most curious example is in Spenser, F. Q. 3, 10, 31:

But minds of mortall men are muchell mard

And mov'd amisse with massy mucks unmeet regard.—W. W. S.

P. 476, note 4; 477, note 1. The name *Orm* has never been fully cleared up; the author also calls himself *Ormin* in another passage, where the accent falls rather on the *i* than on the *o*. I do not see why *Orm* may not mean "serpent;" and *Ormin* may then answer to Icel. *orm-inn*, i. e. "the serpent," with the post-positive definite article. The name of *worm* may sound ludicrous in modern English, but the word formerly meant "serpent" or "dragon," and had quite different associations, being (like *bear* or *deer*) a suitable name for a warrior. The Latin *Arminius* is merely a Latin travesty of some German name, possibly of *Irmin*; and it seems to me quite certain that *Arminius* and *Ormin* are in no way related.—W. W. S.

P. 483, note 5. The Latin version is not the original; on the contrary, Morton shews that the Latin is a translation from the English.—W. W. S.

P. 510, l. 30. See *Æneid*, iv. 174.

P. 511, l. 16. See *Metamorph.* ii. 761.

P. 518, l. 3. This conclusion is a very bold one; it is as much as to say that all the accents are on the unaccented syllables. I would therefore scan it thus :

A | ve ma | ris stel | la  
De | i ma | ter al | ma, &c.

The rimes do not seem to be intended as full rimes; and it cannot be said that the *-go* in *vir-go* is any better rime to the *-ta* in *por-ta* than the former syllable *vir-* is to the syllable *por-*.—W. W. S.

P. 525, l. 9. Thanks to the patient researches of Professor Child and Mr. Ellis, and the grammatical rules of Dr. Morris, the scansion of Chaucer is now a tolerably easy matter.—W. W. S.

P. 532, l. 21. See a stave of Opitz; Müller, *Deutsche Dichter*, i. 204.—E. G.

P. 534. I think that Lydgate meant none of these lines to contain more than *four* accents; and I should, accordingly, be inclined to sink one of the accents in all the lines that are marked with *five* accents. Thus, I should slur over *for* in l. 3 (though this is awkward), *How* in l. 5, *And* in l. 7, *Then* in l. 22. Also, in line 20, I should put but *one* accent on *spectacles*, omitting that marked upon the last syllable of the word.—W. W. S.

P. 536, l. 5. Probably *priests* should be *priestes* (as in the Globe edition), and was meant by Spenser to be pronounced as a dissyllable, just as he has *whalēs bone*, with *whales* in two syllables, in the *Faerie Queen*, iii. l. 15. Scan the line thus :

And of | ten crost | : with the priest | es crewe | .

The next line is too long; we want *no* accent on *water*.—W. W. S.

P. 537, l. 7. The triple measure, though not then common, certainly occurs as early as in the *thirteenth* century. The following is plainly an example of it :

Of ryb | audz y rym | e  
ant red | e o my rol | le,  
Of ged | elynges, gro | mes,  
of Col | yn ant of Col | le, &c.

Wright, *Polit. Songs*, p. 237.

This is the very poem of which some lines are cited at p. 396 of this volume.

P. 553, l. 1. I should put *no* accent on *and*.—W. W. S.

P. 614. The extract from Dame Juliana Berners differs considerably from the printed text in the Cambridge University Library.—W. W. S.

P. 641, l. 4. *Band*. Cf. *bande*, i.e. bound [used in the related sense of "coupled" or "fastened"].

And some in lynes two theyr ryme aye *bande* ;  
But though my witte be not so curious  
As theirs by ferre, to make it glorious,...  
Into *balade* I wyll it nowe translate.

*Hardyng's Chron. Proheme*, st. 3.—E. G.

P. 644, l. 26. The "thirteen verses" consist of eight of one kind of rime, and five of another. The roundle was divided into three couplets; and, at the end of the second and third, the beginning of it was repeated—in an equivocal sense, if possible; see *Dict. de Trevoux*.—E. L. S.

P. 685, note 1. MS. Coll. Greah. 315, is now MS. Arundel 327. Printed by Lord Clive for the Roxburgh Club, 1835.—E. G.

The title of the book is *The Lyvys of Seyntes*; translated into English be a Doctor of Dyuynite clepid Osbern Bokenam, frer Austyn of the convent of Stockclare; 1835. (Presented by Viscount Clive, President).—W. W. S.

P. 686, l. 23. Hending is a mythical personage, whose father Marcolf is fabled to have disputed with King Solomon. He certainly did not live in the thirteenth century.—W. W. S.

P. 702, note 2. We can, on the contrary, always tell a French word from an English one, by observing Grimm's law. The supposition that the word *number* can be found in Anglo-Saxon, or indeed in any Teutonic language at an early period, is quite unfounded. The "one other language" here referred to, is probably Welsh; and it is true that Pugh's *Welsh Dictionary* gives Welsh etymologies for French and English words, but they are all unfounded. The Latin language *will* enable us to resolve *num-erus* into a derivative from the Aryan root *nam*, to distribute.—W. W. S.

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# LIST OF PAPERS, ETC., ON PHILOLOGICAL SUBJECTS BY THE AUTHOR OF "ENGLISH RHYTHMS."

[Dr. Guest's papers on *historical* subjects may be found in the reprint of them to be shortly edited by Professor Stubbs. The present list contains the names of all the *philological* papers written by him, which I have been able to find.—W. W. S.]

The most important of the papers on philology are to be found in the transactions of the Philological Society of London, of which society Dr. Guest was one of the original founders, and, especially during the earlier years of its existence, a very active member. The following is a list, with dates and references, of his papers published for that Society, with a few notes indicating the general drift of them.

## I. PROCEEDINGS OF THE PHILOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

In the list of "Original Members," dated Nov. 25, 1842, we find the name of "E. Guest, Esq., F.R.S., Fellow of Caius College, Cambridge."

1. Vol. i., p. 9. Dec. 9, 1842.—On certain Welsh Names of Places preserved in English Compounds.

The names treated of are Orkney, Ramsgate, Canterbury, Winchester, Worcester, and Netley.

2. Vol. i., p. 65. March 10, 1843.—On certain Inflections of the Old English Adjective.

Treats of such forms as *her bother* and *her beyre* (i.e. of them both), *her aller* (of them all), *their aller*, *our aller*; *our* (for *ours*), *your* (for *yours*); *ours*, *yours*, *theirs*, *hers*, *ouren*; pl. adj. in *-e*; def. adj. in *-e*; plural adj. in *-s* or *-es* (as in *heire generales*, *letters patents*, *shippes hoppesteres*, i.e., dancing ships, &c.).

3. Vol. i., p. 103. May 26, 1843.—On English Gentile Nouns, and more particularly on their Secondary Use as Names of Districts.

Treats of the forms *Angle*, *Est-Angle*, *Somerset*, *Dorset*, *Surrey*, *Normandy*, and a large number of similar names.

4. Vol. i., p. 151. Dec. 8, 1843.—On English Pronouns indeterminate.

Treats of *me* = *men* = *man*, i.e., one; *comes me*, *goes me*, *it*, *'tis*, *it am I*, *it ben ye*, *that am I*, *there's*, and many similar phrases; with numerous quotations.

5. Vol. i., p. 217. March 8, 1844.—On the Ellipsis, and on the Pleonastic Use of the Pronoun Personal in English Syntax.

Treats of *see'st* (for *see'st thou*), *art* (for *thou art*), *am* (for *I am*), &c.; *him*

*Holofernes, him Darius, Wolsey he did it, erl ye body, Count his gallies*, and many similar phrases; with numerous examples.

6. Vol. i., p. 251. May 10, 1844.—On the Use of the Dative in English Syntax.

Treats of *him, I sal you say, talk me of Cassio, it were me lever, betere us is, I will roar you* (Mids. Nt. Dream); the ethic dative; *he rideth him, as I me rode, him semed, me-self, hem-selven, him one, him alone, my lane*; &c.

7. Vol. i., p. 277. June 28, 1844.—On English Pronouns Personal.

Treats of *ich, che vor'ye, wit* (we two), *un* (him), *his* (its), *it* (its), *ys = is* (them), *ye* as the objective case, *she* (for her), *than whom*; &c., &c.

8. Vol. ii., p. 6. Nov. 22, 1844.—On the Ellipsis of the Verb in English Syntax.

9. Vol. ii., p. 69. Feb. 28, 1845.—On the Use of the Collective Noun in English Syntax.

Treats of *winter, year, pound, mile, yoke, horse*, used as plurals; *sterre* (stars), *frend* as a pl. form, &c.

10. Vol. ii., p. 149. Nov. 28, 1845.—On the Anomalous Verbs of the English Language.

In this paper are also notes of *I's* (I am); *is* as a plural; also examples of such words as *can, ken, an* (grants), *mun* (must), *may, ow* (ought), *dow* (am able), *wot, mot, dar, thar, shal, wol*; with numerous examples.

11. Vol. ii., p. 189. Jan. 30, 1846.—On the Anomalies of the English Verb arising from the Letter-changes.

Treats of *stant, standeth, chil, chideth, rist, riseth, &c.*; also *do, be*, as past participles, &c.; with 173 quotations.

12. Vol. ii., p. 223. March 13, 1846.—On English Verbs, Substantive and Auxiliary.

Treats of *we beth, we are, bees, shall be, worth, to become, let make, let do, did do, gan telle, can begin*, and the like; with 127 quotations.

13. Vol. ii., p. 241. April 24, 1846.—On the Ordinary Inflections of the English Verb.

Treats of the suffix *-eth, -ye* (infinitive suffix), the gerund, present participle, strong preterites and past participles.

14. Vol. iii., p. 1. Nov. 27, 1846.—On Orthographical Expedients.

Treats of various old spellings.

15. Vol. iii., p. 31. Feb. 26, 1847.—On the Elements of Language; their Arrangement and their Accidents.

Illustrates the theory "that all known languages are merely modifications of one primeval tongue, the most faithful representative of which is to be found in the Chinese."

16. Vol. iii., p. 71. April 23, 1847.—The same subject continued.

17. Vol. iii., p. 165. Feb. 25, 1848.—The same continued.

18. Vol. iii., p. 187. Mar. 25, 1848.—The same continued.

19. Vol. iv., p. 239. April 26, 1850.—The same continued.

20. Vol. iv., p. 261. June 14, 1850.—The same continued.

21. Vol. v., p. 41. March 7, 1851.—The same continued.

22. Vol. v., p. 71. May 9, 1851.—On the Origin of certain A. S. Idioms. Chiefly on the suffix *-ing*.

23. Vol. v., p. 97. Nov. 21, 1851.—On a Curious Tmesis, which is sometimes met with in A. S. and Early English Syntax.

Chiefly on *winter biter weder, se geap naca, sumar lange dagas*, &c., where an adjective is supposed to be inserted between the two parts of a compound substantive.

24. Vol. v., p. 169. May 7, 1852. On certain Foreign Terms, adopted by our Ancestors prior to their Settlement in the British Islands.

On such words as *pear, pea, cole-wort, nepe*, &c., borrowed from Latin.

25. Vol. v., p. 185. June 11, 1852.—The same continued.

(On *tile, castle, port, wall, street, mill, kitchen, kiln*, &c.)

26. Vol. vi., p. 31. Feb. 25, 1853.—On the Etymology of *Stone-henge*. Connects *henge* with *hinge* and *hang*.

We also find an important paper, entitled, "Dr. Guest and Dr. Abbott on English Metre, by Professor J. B. Mayor." Printed in the Phil. Soc. Trans. 1873-4, p. 624. This paper deserves careful perusal, in connection with the study of rhythms.

In the Phil. Soc. Trans. 1859, p. 26, Mr. H. Coleridge controverts the view of Dr. Guest (Hist. Eng. Rhythms, p. 491 of the present edition) that no traces of Danish are to be found in our MSS. or our dialects. It is now well known that Scandinavian words abound in England.

II. GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE, June, 1838.—Contains a review of "A History of English Rhythms, by E. Guest, Esq., M.A., 2 vols. 8vo. Pickering, 1838." This is a well-written notice, possibly (in my opinion) by T. Wright. The reviewer points out, among other things, that Hending, son of Marcolf, was a fictitious personage, not an Early English author; in fact, there exist dialogues between Marcolf and King Solomon. Also, that the evidence for Thomas of Ercildoun is but slight; and that Pilkington has small claim to be considered as the author of the Tournament of Tottenham, there being no "tradition" on the subject, only the occurrence of his name in the same MS.

III. THE ATHENÆUM, Vol. for 1838, p. 551.—Contains a brief review of "English Rhythms."



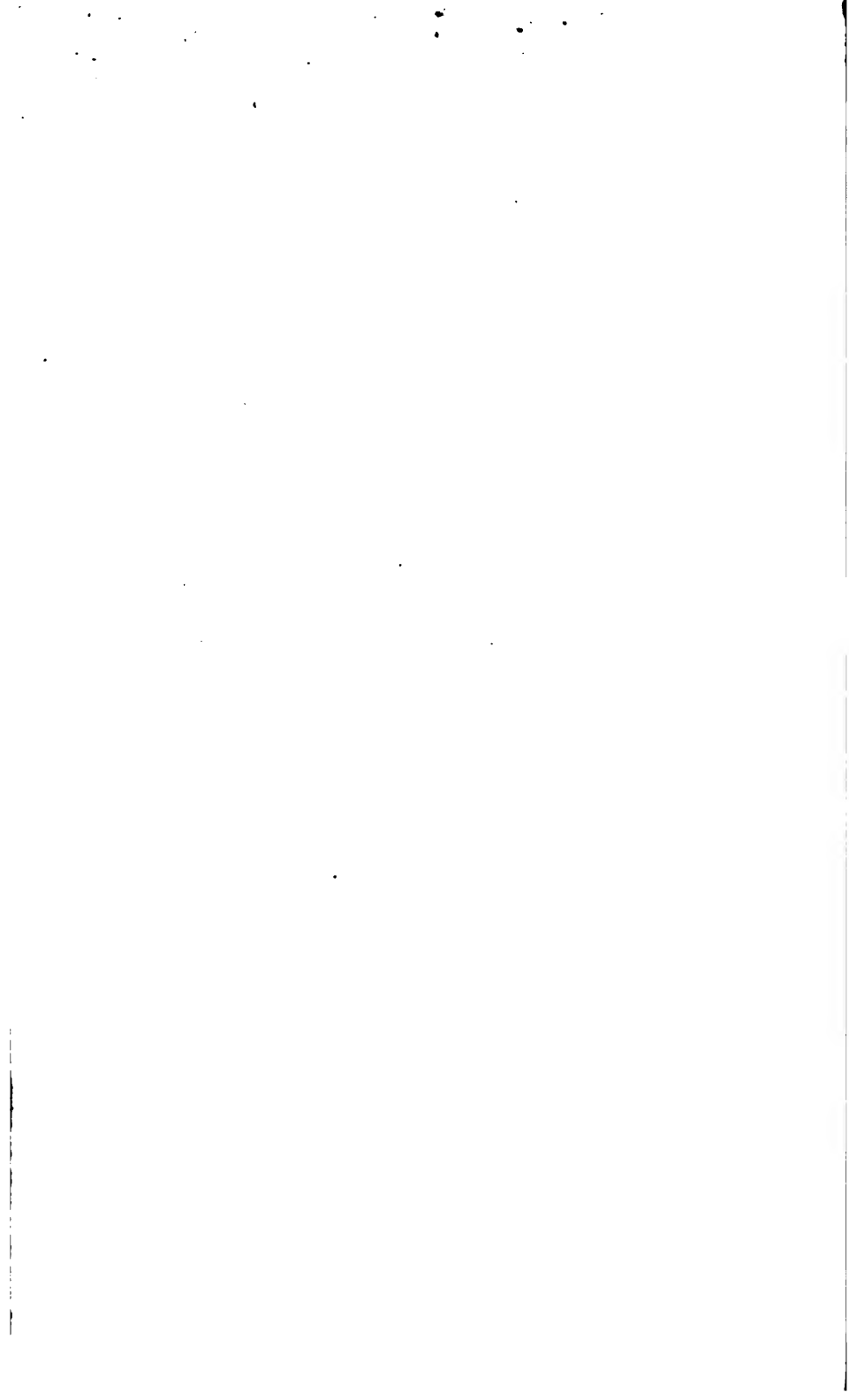
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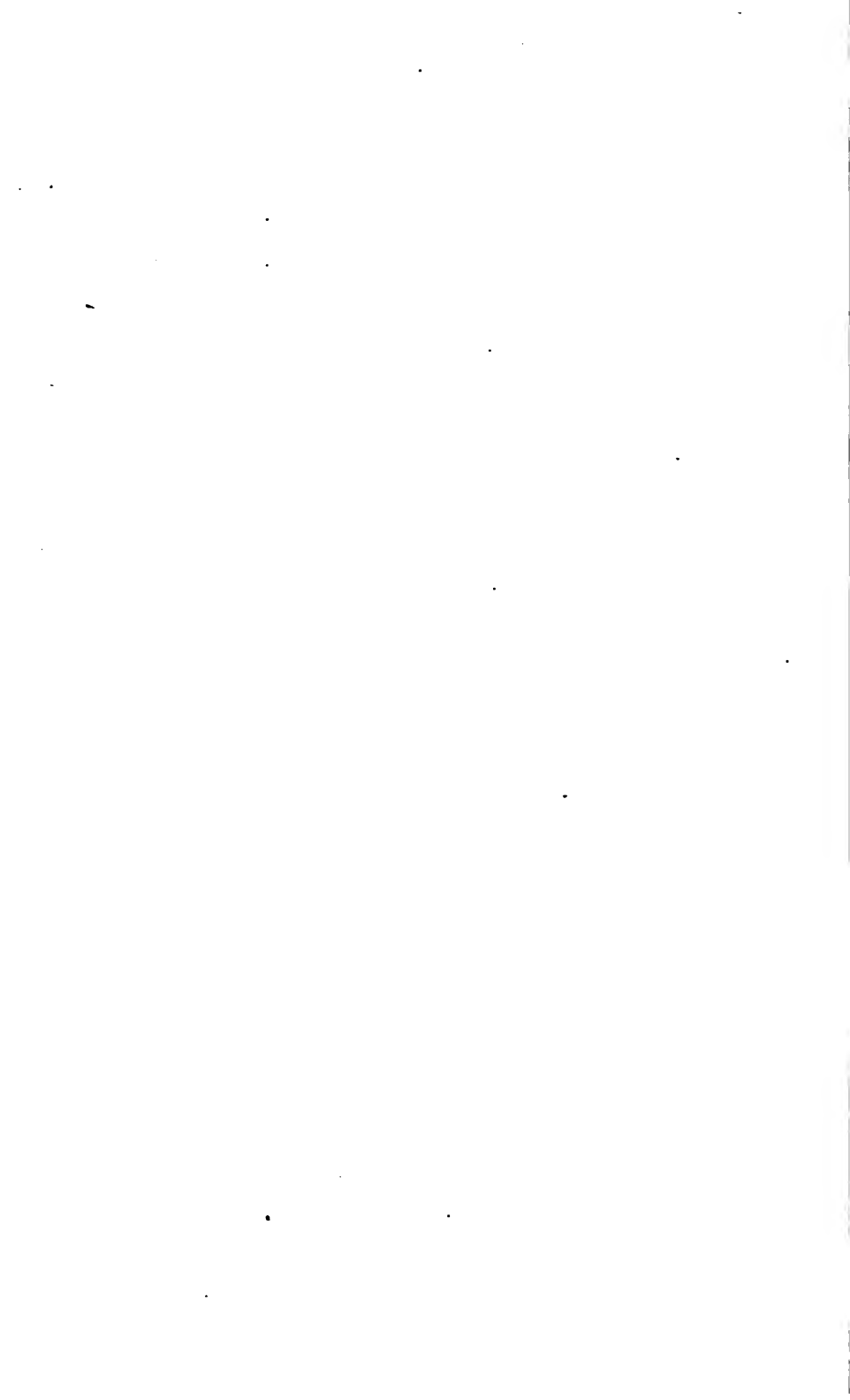














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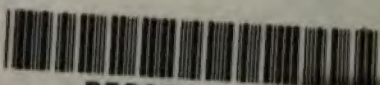
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